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**Contributors**

Vaquero, pseud.

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LIFE AND ADVENTURE  
IN THE WEST INDIES.

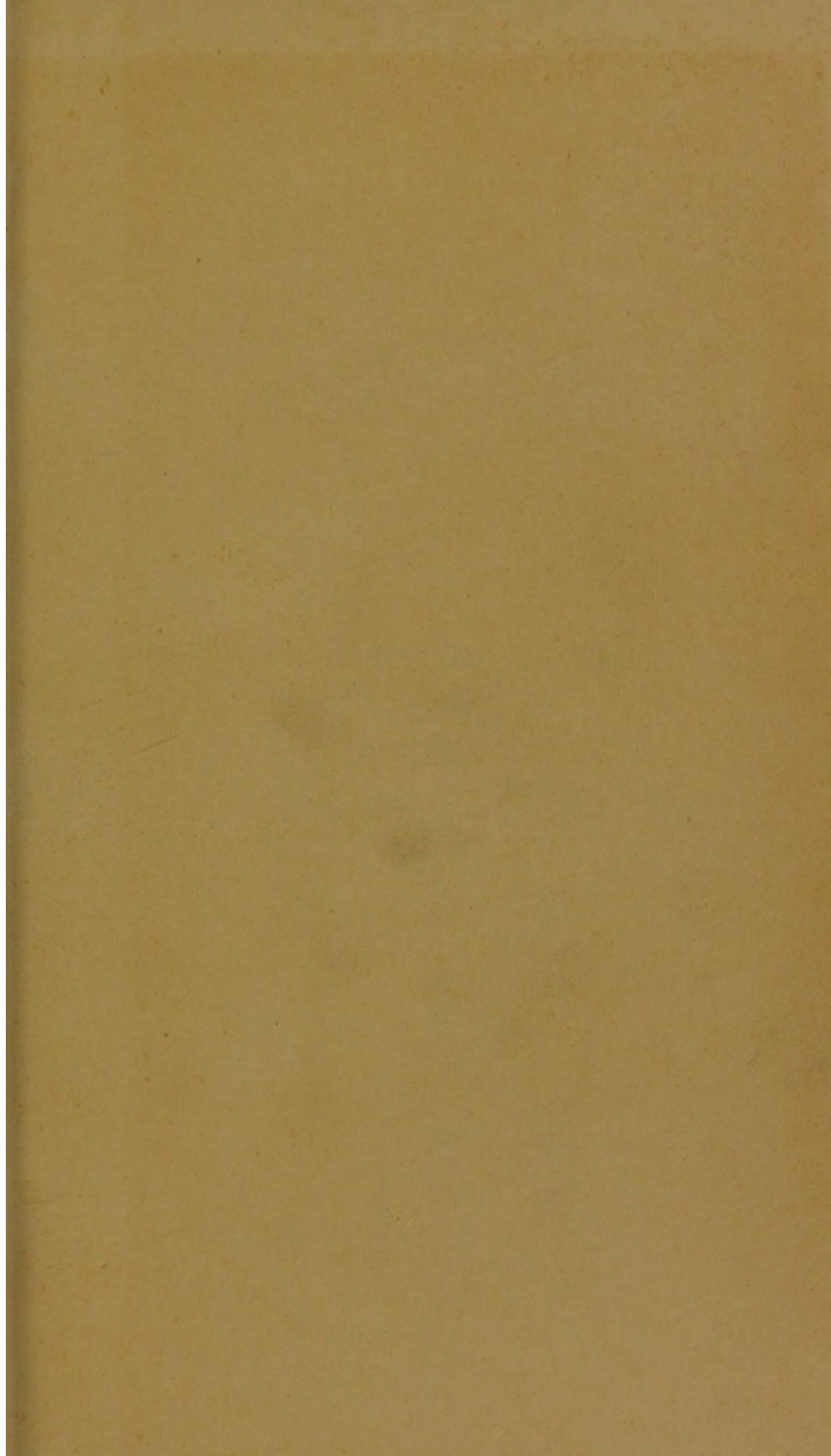






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LIFE AND ADVENTURE IN THE  
WEST INDIES



BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

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**ADVENTURES IN SEARCH OF  
A LIVING IN SPANISH-AMERICA.**

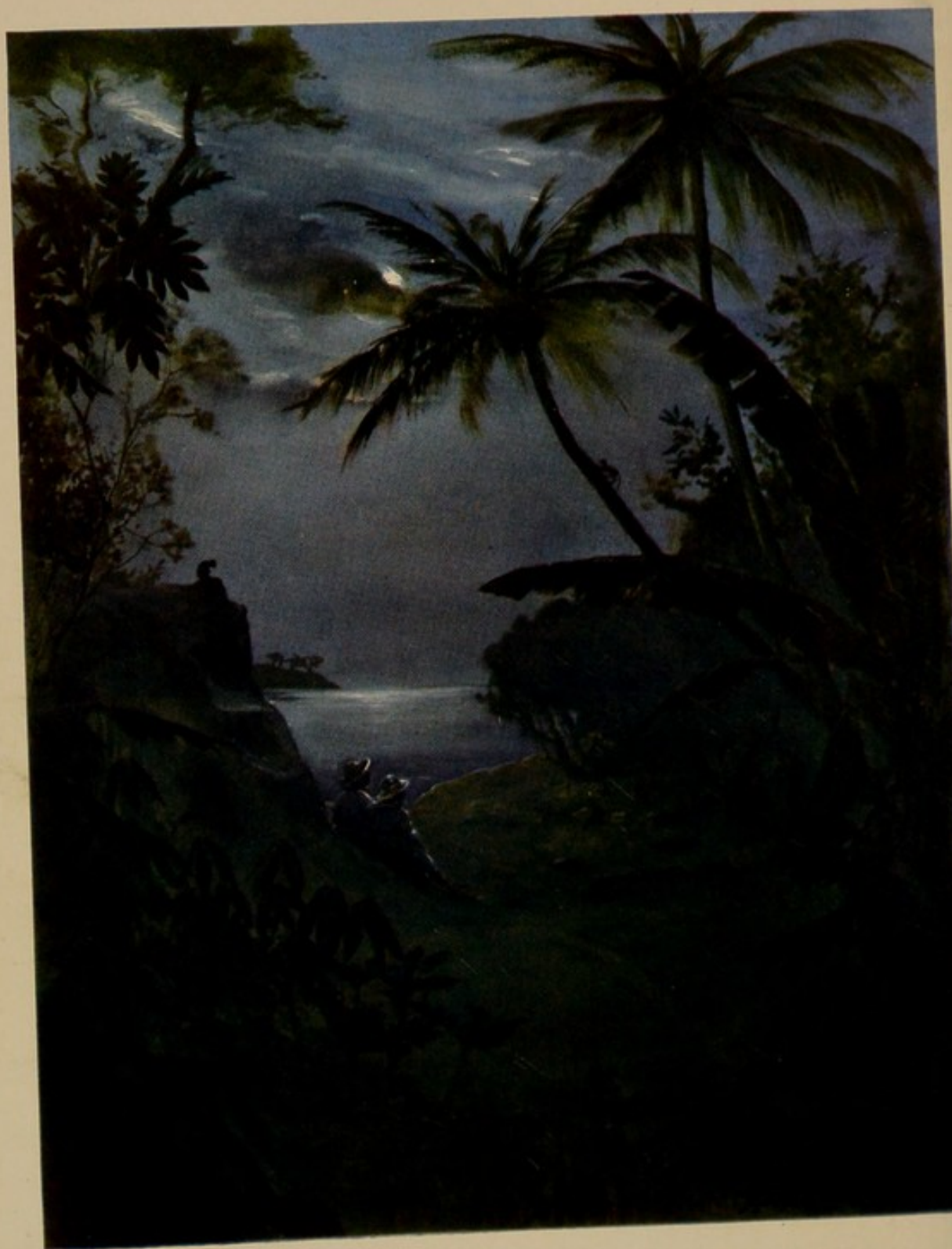
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# LIFE AND ADVENTURE IN THE WEST INDIES

A SEQUEL TO  
ADVENTURES IN SEARCH OF  
A LIVING IN SPANISH-AMERICA

BY  
"VAQUERO"

*With Coloured Frontispiece and 109 Illustrations*



London  
JOHN BALE, SONS & DANIELSSON, LTD.  
OXFORD HOUSE  
83-91, GREAT TITCHFIELD STREET, OXFORD STREET, W.

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(2) ZDF. 71

## TO-NIGHT, MY DEAR CLAUDINE.

(*A West Indian Ballad.*)

BY "VAQUERO."

The fishermen folk at Half-Moon Fort  
Tell a wonderful story of me,  
How I dive in the tide to meet my bride,  
Whom they call the Fair-Maid-of-the-Sea,  
Things quite untrue that I could not do,  
For the only place where I've been  
Lives a little brown girl with an obeah curl,  
And she is my own Claudine.

To-night, my dear Claudine, to-night, my dear Claudine,  
We'll linger together, all free from the weather,  
To-night, my dear Claudine.

For here is the cave in the monkeys' glen,  
And we'll shelter beneath the rocks  
On the short sea-turf and list to the surf  
As it shivers in endless shocks,  
The cloud near the moon will cover it soon,  
So we'll try what the spell may mean,  
And whether it prove that you really love  
The one who loves you, Claudine.  
To-night, my dear Claudine, &c.

And now the cloud goes over the moon  
And the obeah spell begins,  
With a 'one, two, three, does my love love me?  
And the good or the evil wins,'  
As I hold the curl of my little brown girl  
With my fingers twisted between,  
And you must not resist to be fondled and kissed  
Else the spell will be lost, Claudine.  
To-night, my dear Claudine, &c.

The spell works fast and the spell works deep,  
But what do these monkeys say?  
As they dance around with a chattering sound  
So we won't yet go away,  
For this is a chance that may come but once  
While the moon lies under a screen,  
And the monkeys will soon chaunt an obeah tune  
For me and my own Claudine.  
To-night, my dear Claudine, &c.



# THE HISTORY OF THE

REIGN OF

CHARLES THE FIRST

BY

JOHN BURNET

OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

IN TWO VOLUMES

LONDON

Printed by J. Streater, at the

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Church-yard, 1679.

THE SECOND VOLUME.

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## PREFACE.

---

THE present volume contains so few allusions to the preceding one that it is quite capable of being read as an independent production, being, on the face of it, a friendly effort to portray, by means of words and pictures, the beauty, the commercial products and the people of the West Indian Islands. Something more, however, than a mere description has been attempted by drawing attention to several of the causes which have adversely affected the prosperity of these places.

The predictions made in the former volume relative to the results of the monopoly of the Panama Canal, and to the desirability of having an international waterway, have already been verified by the dispute about the canal-dues, and by the action of the United States in making negotiations for a suzerainty over Nicaragua, for the purpose of preventing other nations from using this alternative route. Owing to such unremitting American activity which is fast absorbing the Spanish-speaking Republics, Great Britain cannot afford to neglect her West Indian Islands, which are so near the scene of these vast changes that they must be implicated in them.

In support of the views advanced in this book, local and American authorities have often been quoted as being more conversant with the situation. Thus an endeavour has been made to write from a West Indian point of view, without favouring any particular section of the people at the expense of the others, and to show that the capabilities and value of these fertile Islands have not been sufficiently appreciated. Care has been taken to state the facts as accurately as possible, and if any of the inferences are wrong the author has at least erred in good company. The pictures, with two exceptions, have all been taken from original photographs.

THE AUTHOR.



THE HISTORY OF

THE

THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, FROM THE FIRST SETTLEMENTS TO THE PRESENT TIME. BY JAMES M. SMITH, ESQ. VOLUME I. NEW-YORK: PUBLISHED BY J. B. ALLEN, 1840.

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THE HISTORY OF

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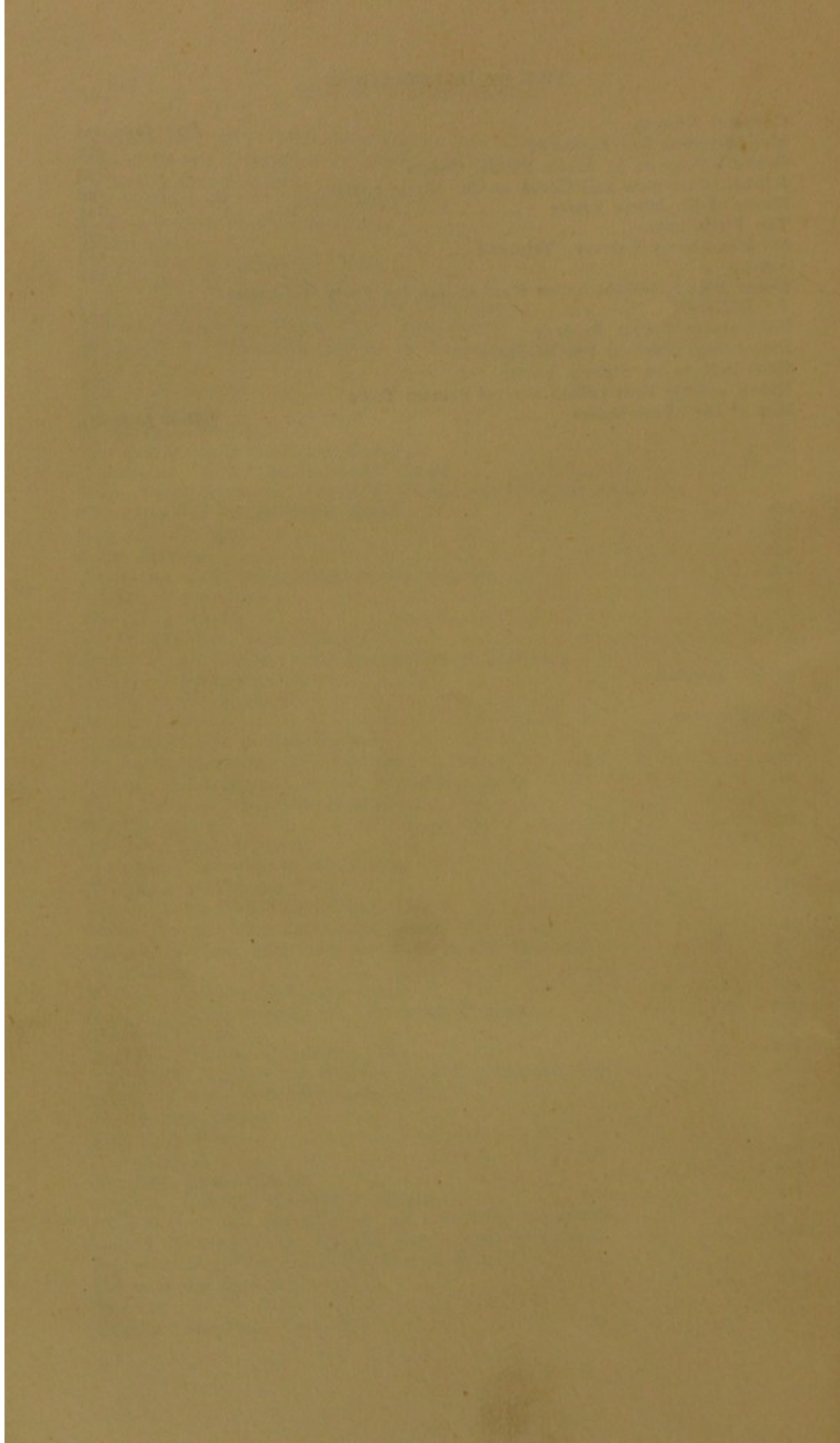
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# Life and Adventure in the West Indies.

## CHAPTER I.

### FROM CUBA TO JAMAICA.

**Q**UARANTINED again in Cuba after an absence of six years! The recurrence of such an event does not tend to give a favourable impression, although the consequences were much less to be dreaded than on the former occasion, when the Island had hardly emerged from the chaos caused by the Spanish-American War. The Cubans had now enjoyed Home Rule for some time, so that everything might be expected to have settled down into fairly good working order; but even if this were not the case, there was no longer much inducement to rob me. The things of value which had then been stolen had never been replaced, and my old trunks had now assumed such a battered appearance after so much travelling that they were hardly likely to tempt any enterprising thief.

Our present quarantine station, on the opposite side of the harbour from Havana, was surrounded by some fenced-in ground which afforded better opportunities for taking exercise than the little steamer of the former occasion, while even the limited space devoted to housing us on land was preferable to a little cabin. Two beds, arranged in nautical style, one over the other, comprised the sleeping accommodation in my diminutive compartment, where I soon found that both my American fellow-lodger and myself wanted to occupy the top berth. Our reasons for wanting it, however, were entirely different, mine being from the selfish motive that I considered it the best, while the American may be said to have been actuated by humanity, as he thought that it would be inconvenient or even dangerous for me to climb up into it. We finally settled the matter by tossing a coin, and as humanity won, my opportunities for risking an ascent had to be deferred.

Presumably the suspicious circumstances attending the fatal illness on the recent voyage had been modified as far as possible, otherwise we should hardly have escaped with a quarantine of only five days, which was a usual sanitary measure adopted towards any ship coming from a Gulf (of Mexico) port, even when the health of all on board had been good. Thus, Havana, formerly considered to be one of the most unhealthy places in this region, was now affecting to consider itself better than its neighbours.

The daily charge for our maintenance was a dollar and a half; not



an unreasonable price if our food and accommodation had been really good, but allowing an excessive profit on the cheap and inferior style of providing for so many people. Our meals were taken in a long kind of hall, where two or three rows of tables ran the length of the building, the food consisting of dishes of a rather vague description, in which a little meat was almost lost among a large quantity of vegetables—so much so that at my end of the table, which appeared to be generally the last served, the meat had sometimes disappeared, and it was only through the flavour which it had imparted to the other ingredients that one could conjecture what its nature had been. A piano, however, was frequently played at meal-times in the hope of distracting our attention from any shortcomings in the food.

A large number of the people were Americans, some of whom grumbled at so close an imitation of their own rigorous system of quarantine. The Cubans, however, had a ready answer for them: "These are your own customs which we did not understand until you taught us." Several of the Americans were going to settle in an island to the south of the western part of Cuba, called the Isle of Pines. This place had a double attraction in its reputed fertility and the expectation that it would be taken under the direct control of the United States, whereas those who settled in Cuba would be, nominally at least, in a foreign country. It seems probable, however, that the sovereign power now exercised indirectly over Cuba will in the course of time undermine whatever forms of self-government now exist.

The great event of our daily life in the quarantine was the muster for examination. We took our seats just outside the building in two rows facing each other, while the doctors tested our temperatures. Permission was given me to use a private thermometer, which it is desirable to have on such occasions, when, in order to save trouble, the official one, instead of being placed under the armpit, is inserted into the mouth, a proceeding very repugnant to those who have any doubts about the cleanliness of the instrument.

Among the curious medley of people was an Austrian who had inherited the business of one of the largest glass-eye manufactories in the world. We had also a lady with a noticeable disfigurement in the region of one of her eyes—not, however, of the kind which was likely to need the services of the glass-eye manufacturer, being apparently that effect of a bruise popularly termed "a black eye." She made herself remarkable by being the most dressy female in the place, so that it became a joke to say, "I'll introduce you to the lady with the black eye."

When the period of enforced seclusion drew towards a close, I began to wonder if I should be able to find out any of the people I had seen in Havana six years previously, and had some hopes that I might be able to obtain information about the robbery of my luggage. Even in the absence of any direct proof against the scoundrel Osorio, who was the only one aware of the contents of the stolen trunk, it would be some satisfaction to give him my opinion of a man who cultivates an acquaintance with a fellow-passenger for the express purpose of robbing him. As no illness had broken out before the expiration of five days, we were dismissed and our places occupied by more recent arrivals. Knowing from experience that Havana was an expensive



place, I had already found out the name of an hotel which was considered cheap, where I managed to obtain a small room on the top storey for seventy-five cents gold, or about three shillings in English money. This, of course, did not include food, which with the utmost economy cost rather more than the room.

I now commenced my inquiries, calling first at the address of the late Chief of the Secret Police, who had received full particulars of the robbery on the former occasion. He had left the house, and the present occupants did not even know where so important a person was now living.

My next visit was to the Calzado del Cerro to see the lieutenant of police, who had been a fellow-passenger and knew the facts of the case. On arriving at the place where the police used to be quartered, I was informed that they had been moved elsewhere, but following up the address given, I presented myself to the officer in charge and asked to see my former acquaintance. The officer told me that the lieutenant had left the police and could generally be found at a central café much frequented by the youth of Havana. It did not look promising for my quest that a person on whom I depended for information should have left his employment to become a café-lounger; nevertheless, I took the address and succeeded in finding the café.

The man who presided at the counter knew the lieutenant well, and promised to give him the letter in which I had mentioned my present address. Receiving no answer within the next few days, I called at the café again, when the same man told me that he had given my letter to the lieutenant, who had said nothing in reply, and my informant further stated, with a suggestive smile, that the person in question was in the house at present. People who speak the so-called Latin languages are more skilful than northern Europeans in conveying an idea by half-words, tones and gestures—by all of which I was so assured that my former acquaintance did not wish to see me that I left the café in disgust, giving up all hope of following the matter any further. I had already looked for the hotel "La Navarra" where Osorio had brought me on my first arrival, but the former occupants had gone and the house was no longer used as an hotel, so every clue seemed at an end. It was the same Havana as before, with fine avenues, beautiful tropical foliage, well-built streets and expensively dressed people of all colours, but with famine prices for strangers at any rate, and the idea, rightly or wrongly, had become impressed on my mind (like that of the sea-captain mentioned in the former volume) that the people were not reliable, with the exception perhaps of the negroes, who were generally cordial and obliging in their manner. These considerations made me anxious to continue my journey to Jamaica as soon as possible.

In the West Indies it is rather remarkable that different islands, presenting such a similarity in climate and surroundings, and all containing a large number of black and coloured people, should vary so greatly in the cost of living. Following the analogy in Europe, one might have expected higher prices in the English-speaking islands, but even in the dearer parts of the British West Indies, as in Jamaica, the cost of living is less than in Cuba.



Before leaving Mexico I had only been able to find out that there was communication by steamer between Santiago in the south-east of Cuba and Jamaica, so it was now a relief to find that there was a continuous train service from Havana to Santiago, otherwise such a long journey between the opposite ends of this large Island would have been troublesome. About three or four days, therefore, after coming out of the quarantine I started in the so-called express, which appears to average a speed of about twenty miles an hour during the journey of twenty-five hours, as the distance between these places is probably about five hundred miles by rail. The train only carried a first and third class, my ticket in the latter costing an equivalent to two pounds in English money. We left towards nightfall, so there was little opportunity for seeing the rather pretty country in the neighbourhood of the capital, which on my former visit had left a more favourable impression than the people. Not that I had seen any views to be compared with those in the more picturesque islands, such as Grenada and Dominica, but the country had that smiling appearance which accompanies a fertile soil. When, however, morning broke we had already travelled far enough for the sugarcane and tobacco of the more populated western districts to be replaced by that vast expanse of untilled open country in the central and eastern parts of the Island, where there might hardly be one or two distant homesteads in sight.

Cuba, indeed, is lightly inhabited as compared with Jamaica, having about ten times the area of the latter Island, with little more than twice the population. The country was pretty and fertile-looking, being well covered with grass, while at intervals over the undulating prairie grew those graceful palm trees which Cuba has rightly taken as her emblem on her postage stamps. There was, however, nothing to justify that extravagant praise in which both Spaniard and Cuban seem to have vied, a sample of which is contained in the following lines, where Cuba has been likened to a beautiful human being :—

“La palma que en el bosque se mece gentil  
(The palm which in the wood rocks itself gracefully)

Tu sueño arrulló  
(Lulled thee to sleep)

Y un beso de la brisa al morir de la tarde  
(And a kiss of the breeze of the expiring afternoon)

Te despertó  
(Awake thee)

Y al contemplarte  
(And on gazing at thee)

Suspira mi laúd  
(My lute sighs)

Bendiciéndote hermosa sin par . . . ay !  
(Blessing thee beautiful without equal . . . ay !)

Porque Cuba eres tú.”  
(For Cuba it is thee).

It must be remembered that the Spanish temperament is more vivid than that of the northern European and will see the glories



of heaven in what an English person would merely call "pretty." Soon after nightfall the tiring journey came to an end at Santiago, where I put up at a fairly good hotel and made inquiries on the following morning about the departure of steamers for Jamaica. Fortunately I had only one or two days to wait, as the cost of living seems to be considerable everywhere in Cuba.

American money had displaced Spanish coinage even more in Santiago than in Havana, so much so that there was a difficulty in getting people to take Spanish dollars, even at a lower rate, thereby offering the curious anomaly of a so-called independent country which had no currency of its own. A first-class passage from Santiago to Kingston cost fifteen dollars in American money, which was very dear for a voyage of less than twenty-four hours. The distance between the two Islands is only about ninety miles, although of course the journey to Kingston is considerably farther, as the steamer has to double round the eastern coast of Jamaica before arriving at the capital.

We were now coasting within sight of land with ample opportunities for noticing an island which I now regarded with considerable interest as the sphere of my future labours. Besides, Jamaica occupies such a conspicuous place, owing to its superior size and prominence as a tourist resort, that to many English people it has almost become synonymous with the West Indies, and its beauties have been extolled in terms not much less entrancing than those of the ecstatic troubadours of Cuba. These extraordinary beauties did not unfold themselves to my eyes, although the eastern coast is certainly pretty, bearing a family resemblance to many other West Indian islands, with a bold and mountainous sea front and a considerable amount of verdure, amongst which the graceful coco-nut palms are conspicuous.

The harbour of Kingston is formed by a long neck of low-lying ground which runs almost parallel with the mainland, the town being situated on flat country below an abrupt mountain range. A pleasing tropical appearance is imparted by the palm trees which in places grow down to the water's edge, but the harbour, although a fine one, is by no means one of the picked beauty spots. On arriving at Kingston my first difficulty was to know where to lodge, for my previous experience had only been that of a deck passenger who was spending a few hours on shore, so I left my luggage temporarily in the steamer while I looked about for a suitable place. A negro boy attached himself to me as a guide, but I was disappointed by finding that, though smart and well-spoken, he did not appear to be well acquainted with Kingston. The reason was explained on hearing that he was the son of one of the black soldiers who had been quartered in Africa, and, as the boy had not long returned, he was probably better acquainted with some place in the ancestral continent than with the home of his more immediate relations. Expensive places are more easily found than humble lodgings, and the afternoon being now advanced, the boy advised me to go to the Queen's Hotel, which is centrally situated and very suitable for the reduced circumstances of those who can only afford to pay one shilling by the night or five shillings by the week for the use of a little room, the lodger having the option of taking his meals where he pleases.

The old Kingston, which was partially destroyed by earthquake and



fire a little more than a year after my arrival, was a large but not an imposing looking town, containing its due share of those little wooden houses so prevalent in the British West Indies. Fine buildings, however, are only trifling factors as compared with the necessities of life, and it was a relief to feel that I was no longer a foreigner working at a mechanical disadvantage against customs which, even more than language, tend to make the battle of life harder in a new place.

My first visit was naturally to the Medical Council Office, where I saw the Superintending Medical Officer, and presenting my papers to prove that I was duly qualified, asked if he could suggest a suitable location in Jamaica. He received me very courteously and asked in return what my expectations were with regard to the income of my practice, to which I replied that I would be content with a bare living. So modest an expectation made it more easy to give advice to a stranger, who could not be expected to know that the Island had already a full supply of doctors. Finally he suggested that I should go up country to a place called Gayle, for the following reason. Many of the rural districts were so poor that they would hardly afford sufficient inducement for a doctor to reside in them. It would entail great hardship on the people not to have medical aid at hand, so it was usual to allow a certain number of doctors a substantial subsidy, on the conditions of residing permanently in the district and attending to its medical requirements. This did not entitle the people to gratuitous treatment, but the doctor on his part was expected to be moderate in his charges. Such an arrangement had worked well and every district had its medical officer, but the Government had lately been making economies in the number of subsidized men by merging two of the less important districts into one.

Gayle was one of the districts which had been, so to say, annexed to another. Its former medical officer had been transferred elsewhere and the people were naturally grumbling at having to pay more heavily for a doctor who lived at a distance. It was probable that the late medical officer in Gayle would be willing to rent me his house which was now unoccupied, so I now started on a journey of investigation, leaving all my luggage behind, except a little hand-bag.

All the trains in Jamaica start from the same station and follow the same line as far as Spanish Town, the old capital, about twelve miles from Kingston. Here the western branch, the longest, diverges, following a somewhat central course through the Island to Montego Bay. The other line goes northwards for a short distance as far as Linstead, where it divides again, the shorter branch only going a little farther north-westerly as far as Ewarton, while the eastern branch reaches the northern coast, which it follows to the right as far as the well-known tourist resort of Port Antonio. Gayle lay somewhat more conveniently situated to Ewarton than to any other station, but although only about forty miles from Kingston, it was considered a rather inaccessible place, owing to its distance from the railway, which left the last twenty miles to be negotiated as best one could.

Arriving at Linstead, I called on the doctor who owned the house at Gayle and made arrangements for renting it, in the event of finding the district a suitable one. A few stations farther on brought me to



Ewarton where the railway line ends. I was now in the heart of smiling Jamaica and was well satisfied with the look of the interior of the Island, which, if not coming up to the high-flown description of the guide-books, is quite pretty enough to satisfy an ordinary mortal, with its rapidly running rivers, fertile valleys and profusion of tropical foliage, amongst which the coco-nut palm, the plantain, the bread-fruit and the mango are the most prominent.

It must have been after four in the afternoon, too late to go on to Gayle the same evening, for I was not one of those fortunate individuals who could afford long buggy drives by night, but by walking as far as a settlement called Moneague, some eight miles farther along my road, the next day's journey would be considerably shortened. Jamaican roads are generally very good, and, as the heat of the day had now passed, it was a pleasure to tramp along, bag in hand, enjoying the solitude of my first walk through the pretty country. The mile-stones allayed any apprehensions about losing the way, by informing me of my progress towards Moneague. Now and then I passed a few black or coloured natives, some of whom stared at the unusual sight of a white man walking on the roads of Jamaica. There are, indeed, no whites of the peasant class and even a light-coloured man of any pretensions would probably ride or drive instead of making a journey on foot. Under present conditions in the best known British islands it is perhaps natural that the negro should resent seeing a white man walk, because such a traveller is likely to be a poor person who has no spare money to throw away. The welcome visitor is the rich tourist who stops at the dearest hotels, hires a buggy with a pair of horses, and if out for a long drive carries abundant food and drink with him, the excess of which is given to the people of the place. Such a one may occasionally be seen with a string of children running after the buggy, in the hopes of receiving a shower of pence. The wealthy white man is a "buckra"<sup>1</sup> after their own hearts, but they have no use for the poor one, who in the rare cases of his appearance is looked upon in much the same manner as the "mean white" in the southern parts of the United States.

Among the people I passed were two stalwart young countrywomen, each as tall as a good-sized man, and comely into the bargain. These were the first specimens of Amazonian beauty I had seen, and were duly appreciated. One of them smilingly asked me for a "quattie," the meaning of which was unknown to me at the time, but guessing that it meant money I tendered a penny, which was received with a broad smile and a vigorous courtesy from the knees, after the manner of a rustic girl in the old countries. A "quattie," which is evidently a corruption of the word "quarter," is a term much used by the country people in Jamaica for the sum of three-halfpence. The road through the wild and broken uplands between Ewarton and Moneague lies on a tract of country little cultivated or inhabited, so that when night fell just before arriving at my destination I passed by a good and inexpensive lodging-house near the roadside, without being told in time, and, finding myself in the vicinity of the Moneague Hotel, had unwillingly to seek its hospitality.

<sup>1</sup> Buckra—a white man.



Jamaican hotels in the country parts are rather grand places, built for that class of wealthy tourists to which I did not belong rather than for a dusty traveller who was evidently making a journey on foot, without any baggage except what he carried. Fortunately, the scarcity of guests and the lateness of the hour favoured the privacy of a meal by myself in the dining-room, attended by a well-dressed black waiter. Next morning I went into the little settlement of Moneague to arrange about the hire of a buggy to take me to Gayle, for although I would have preferred to make the whole journey economically on foot, I felt that it might prejudice my future prospects to arrive at the place in such a humble manner.

The journey through this fertile country was pleasant, the communicative black driver pointing out foliage which hitherto was unknown to me, such as that of the cocoa and spice trees. Occasionally we passed a field of long guinea-grass, and as we drew near Gayle there were many plantations devoted to the cultivation of those bananas which have become the principal export from the northern part of Jamaica. On reaching the place, which in England would hardly be large enough to merit the name of village, although it is here dignified by that of township, I inspected the house of the doctor, a good wooden building which lay by itself on rising ground about half a mile outside the settlement. As it would be necessary to remain about a day in order to make the necessary inquiries, I dismissed the buggy, to the disappointment of the black driver, who had hoped to obtain another fare for his employer by taking me back.

The locality was rather nice, being some seven miles from the northern coast, and at an elevation of about twelve hundred feet. The question of elevation is an important one in the West Indies, where it is very desirable to live more than a thousand feet above the sea-level, the climate at this altitude being fresher and more suitable for Europeans. I called at the two principal stores and found that the people would welcome the idea of having a resident doctor, although this by no means meant the certainty of making a living. The township of Gayle consisted merely of two or three stores, a chemist's shop, a post-office and a market-place, together with a few nondescript buildings; it was, however, the nucleus of the district, which was fairly thickly inhabited by black or coloured peasants; for in all the West Indian Islands colour and social position generally go hand in hand, although there are notable exceptions. The upper classes, who comprise the planters, the professional and the principal commercial people, are, as a rule, either white or light-coloured, while the lower classes are dark-coloured or black. In so primitive a place there was no such thing as a lodging-house of any kind, and during the two nights I remained here I was thankful to accept the hospitality of Mr. Lindo, a prominent storekeeper.

Having now decided to try the locality, I began the return journey to Ewarton from my host's house, which was about two miles on the way back. Starting at sunrise, after a light breakfast, the walk was made enjoyable by the hopes I had formed that my wanderings had come to an end in so pleasant a district. In many places the road was partially shaded by tropical foliage, which was a grateful protection against the powerful West Indian sun. For a few miles a



strong negro woman was walking at the same pace as myself, either just in front or behind, swinging along with a man's easy stride at the rate of four miles in the hour while carrying a load on her head. I hardly arrived at Moneague in time to avoid the heat, and continued the journey from there to Ewarton in a buggy, which is generally sent to meet the train. On reaching Linstead I stopped to make an arrangement with the doctor about renting his house by the month, and then returned to Kingston in a satisfied frame of mind at having so soon completed my arrangements.

Before settling down in my new location it was necessary to buy a fair assortment of the more generally used medicines which every doctor must keep in remote places, where there is either no drug-store or only one of an inferior description. This was a great strain on my slender resources, as the expenditure of about ten pounds was hardly sufficient to supply me with the required minimum. In a few days all was ready, but on informing the Superintending Medical Officer that I had made preparations for settling in Gayle, he had most unwelcome news for me. An English doctor who had come to Jamaica for the sake of his health was also thinking of practising in Gayle and was even now inspecting the locality. This indeed was a misfortune so serious that it was hard to know what to do; but as all my preparations had been made I thought it would be better to carry them out, so returning to Gayle in heavy travelling order with my medicines, I took possession of the doctor's house which I had rented by the month. Here I spent a few days, which would have been pleasant except for the anxiety caused by not knowing what the intentions of the other medical man were, and I even had one or two patients, when the wife of the owner of the house drove up unexpectedly in a buggy. She explained that she had come in the place of her husband, who had no time for the journey, to say that the English doctor had made them a better offer for the house than the price which I had arranged to pay, and that, although they were quite willing to allow me to remain in possession until the end of the month, I should then have to vacate the premises in favour of the new tenant.

The worst had happened. The new doctor had not only made up his mind to practise in Gayle, but had also caused me to be turned out by outbidding me for the house. I briefly made up my mind that it would be much better to leave the house at once, for who could have heart to make himself comfortable, knowing that he would have to leave so soon? After making several inquiries about a suitable lodging, I eventually arranged to live with a family just outside the little town. They kindly let me have the use of an outhouse for my dispensary; so that in two or three days' time I was apparently settled down just as if nothing had happened, although my mind was ill at ease from the knowledge that I was going to have the opposition of a man who was better off than myself and could afford to wait. The other doctor had now bought a horse and a buggy, which indeed are almost indispensable in country districts, and was advertising himself by driving about, while I had no money to follow his example. Nothing but an absolute victory would have been sufficient in such a poor place, so it seemed but common prudence to give up the unequal contest before



all my money was spent. Thus before the month was finished I told the lady of the house, who, with her family, had been very kind to me, that I should soon be leaving.

If it had not been for this bad fortune Gayle would have made a pleasant location, with the advantages of a good climate and a river large enough for bathing, while the country was a very fair specimen of that hill and valley scenery which exists in the prettier parts of Jamaica. Before leaving Gayle, Mr. Lindo, who had been so hospitable to me on my first arrival, drew my attention to a notice in the *Government Gazette* in which it was announced that a medical officer was wanted for the Cayman Islands, which are dependencies of Jamaica. It was certainly worth while to make inquiries about the appointment, but there were likely to be a good many applications, and I had some hopes of being able to make a living in Spanish Town, within easy distance of Kingston. When a man does not know what to do, he generally gravitates towards the capital, so I returned to Kingston to report to the Superintending Medical Officer the circumstances which had caused me to leave Gayle, and to ask if in his opinion there was an opening in Spanish Town, where I had left my box of medicines on the return journey. He did not look upon this project as likely to be successful, owing to the number of medical men already there, but when I mentioned the idea of applying for the appointment in the Cayman Islands he seemed to think that there might be a chance. So I brought all my belongings back to Kingston and put in a formal application for the appointment of Government Medical Officer to the Cayman Islands.

At this juncture I had good reason to be obliged to the Superintending Medical Officer for the trouble he took in furthering my suit by accompanying me to the office of the Assistant Colonial Secretary, where he introduced me to this great personage and explained the object of the visit. My application was formally received, but Government appointments are not given away in a hurry, especially when, as in this instance, at least seven or eight men were competing for the same post. Fortunately Kingston is a cheaper place to live in than most other parts of Jamaica, where the only readily found accommodation for a stranger is in those expensive hotels which are built expressly for wealthy tourists. Such places, as a rule, charge from ten to twelve shillings daily. In Kingston, however, there are a large number of people of the poorer commercial and official classes who only receive small salaries and require to be catered for on more reasonable terms. Thus it is quite possible to live comfortably in the capital at a daily cost of about four shillings.

In order to keep in touch with the profession and not to waste my time, I frequently visited the general hospital, where I was kindly received by the doctors. It was the first time that I had seen an institution of this kind filled with black and coloured people, among whom a white patient would be a rarity. One afternoon I accepted an invitation to an entertainment here which was indirectly the cause of a somewhat serious accident to myself. It was my custom to bathe every evening, just before dark, in the swimming-bath of the Marine Gardens, where the bathing-place is fenced off from the sea by palisades. At the usual hour, however, I was still at the hospital, where



among other performances, a certain recitation remains impressed on my memory, owing perhaps to the accident which followed it. This recitation represented the story of the Deluge, couched in a kind of negro English, which invested the catastrophe with a somewhat comical aspect. Noah had been building the ark in the midst of the jeers of the unbelieving people, who all declared, "Massa Noah, he dam fool"; but when the rain came and the Ark began to float, "Massa Noah he put his head out ob de window and he see all de people drown, and he say, 'Who dam fool now?'"

The gentleman who gave the recitation was politic enough to preface it by saying that this was the way the people spoke in a certain part of Africa, so as not to offend the more educated coloured and black people, most of whom speak English very correctly. The entertainment was still going on towards nightfall, when I hurried away to the swimming bath, which was a good twenty minutes' walk from the hospital, and bought my ticket for entering the fenced-in area. It was now quite dark, but I was so familiar with the steps into the shallow end of the water, where it was only about a yard deep, that I ran down them as usual. One of the steps had presumed to be washed away, owing to which my descending foot met with no support and my leg went down between the upper and lower steps until my foot struck against the bottom of the bath. The pain was intense, making me apprehensive that I had been crippled for life. As it was, I went lame for a few weeks and felt a weakness in the knee-joint for months afterwards. There was, however, a better bathing place a little farther out of town, so there was no necessity for risking the repetition of such a dangerous accident.

After about six weeks of suspense, I received the welcome news that I had been appointed on a six months' probation as Government Medical Officer to the Cayman Islands. It was a rare piece of luck that an outsider like myself should have been given the appointment over the heads of several others, but the reason was as follows. Jamaican medical men did not want to go to Cayman, which was considered an out-of-the-way and rather desolate place. Its people were proverbially short of money and the Island is notorious for its mosquitoes. Almost all the applications, therefore, had come from men who lived outside Jamaica, some being even from Canada.

The Government was diffident about appointing a man whom they could not previously see, and being continually at headquarters I had an advantage over the others. Of course I knew that no great plum had fallen into my mouth and that if the appointment had been very desirable some well-known Jamaican would have got it, for I had heard of most of the disadvantages of the place from a doctor at the hospital. My first experience in Jamaica had given me a shock, something like that on my return to Altotonga (mentioned in the former volume), and I had so nearly come to the end of my resources that I would have accepted almost anything which offered a living. The new appointment certainly assured me the necessities of life, as the salary was equivalent to something over one hundred pounds a year, besides the fees of my patients, and I was now continually reminded that I was in the employment of the Government by having the letters G.M.O. (Government Medical Officer) attached to my name.



My first step was to send to London for some new instruments, desiring them to be forwarded to Cayman as soon as possible. The only other necessary purchase was a saddle, which could be more easily bought in Kingston than in the little Island where I was going. I arranged with a wholesale chemist to send me a further supply of drugs when my stock should have run low, and having completed these necessary arrangements, I presented myself at the office of the Superintending Medical Officer to receive final instructions before my departure. On receiving a printed list of my duties I was made somewhat anxious by noticing that I was placed absolutely and directly under the control of the Commissioner of the Cayman Islands, for about half the clauses to regulate my conduct wound up with the phrase "at the discretion of the said Commissioner."

The cause of these rules is explained by an episode in the previous relations of a certain Commissioner and doctor. In former times the subsidized doctor in Cayman enjoyed the same independence as the one in Jamaica. Unfortunately a Commissioner and a doctor had not been on good terms with each other, and the former had tried to exercise his control over the latter's professional conduct. The doctor refused to obey, whereupon the Commissioner drew up a list of regulations which he induced the paramount authority in Jamaica to confirm, thereby placing the doctor in a directly subordinate position. These regulations fell quite beside the mark in the case of the officials for the time being, as the doctor promptly resigned and the Commissioner's authority was drawing to a close, but the rules remained in force for those who came after. The representative of any Government, however, is generally supposed to be a reasonable person, and in any case it was too late to indulge in misgivings when I was only awaiting a means of conveyance to my destination.

Until quite recently the Cayman Islands were one of the few inhabited places which had no steam communication with the outside world, the only means of access being by schooners which plied between them and Jamaica at irregular intervals of sometimes as much as a month. Most of these craft did not exceed forty or fifty tons, but a larger one than usual was going to start in a few days, so, availing myself of the occasion, I embarked with all my belongings.



## CHAPTER II.

## IN THE CAYMAN ISLANDS.

THERE is a curious jingle about the name of the Cayman Islands, which some people have confused with the Cannibal Islands, partly from a slight similarity between the names, and partly because they have an equally vague notion where both these delectable places are situated. A closer relation, however, to flesh-eating propensities of this kind exists in the probable derivation of the name from the Spanish word for alligator (*caimán*), a creature which rivals a cannibal in its fondness for human flesh. The name has been given merely because the long and low outline suggested to the Spanish navigators a similarity in shape, as a place which has no rivers or lakes cannot be the home of the alligator.

These Islands, which are not even marked on all the maps, are situated towards the north-west of Jamaica and are three in number, the principal being called Grand Cayman, and the two smaller Cayman Brac and Little Cayman respectively. Their distances from Jamaica and from each other all contain the mystic number seven in one or other of its forms, as Grand Cayman is about one hundred and seventy miles from the extreme west of Jamaica, while the others are about seventy miles from Grand Cayman and seven miles from each other. They are governed by a Commissioner but are dependencies of Jamaica, and legal appeals are carried to the courts of that colony.

The ship in which I had embarked was bound for George Town, the capital of Grand Cayman, which was to be my official headquarters. This was the first time I had ever taken a voyage in a sailing ship, and as if to initiate me into the vagaries of the wind, a dead calm came on when we were only one or two miles outside Kingston harbour, where we remained anchored for the night and part of the next day, within sight of the town whose comforts we could not enjoy.

My fellow-passenger was one of the two resident ministers of the Scotch church in Grand Cayman, and through his companionship I was able to gain some information about my future abode. Both of us, however, were too much occupied with the anxieties attendant on travelling in a little sailing ship to pay much attention to the future. Fortunately the wind, generally favourable for a westerly direction in these parts, freshened as we got further out to sea, and on



the fourth day a sailor on the mast sighted land, which we had approached within about eight miles before seeing, owing to the flat nature of Grand Cayman, which has not even a hill upon it. We were soon anchored close to the shore, and were taken to the landing place in a boat. I had not the faintest idea what to do with myself or my effects in such a primitive place, where there was no hotel or lodging-house of any kind, as the Government provided no accommodation for the medical officer. I was known, however, to be the doctor, who is a somewhat important personage, and was allowed to store my belongings in the customs-house which forms a part of the large two-storied wooden building where most of the Government offices are situated, generally known by the name of the Court-house. The sergeant of police showed me about the place, otherwise I should have been perplexed to know what to do, for it will be noticed in the picture that there is no town in sight, nor is there effectively such a place. The settlement called George Town indeed exists, and might have contained more than a thousand inhabitants, but all scattered along the sea front and through the bush.

My guide first conducted me to the house of the Commissioner, where I was courteously received by that magnate, and we then set out on the somewhat difficult quest of a suitable house.

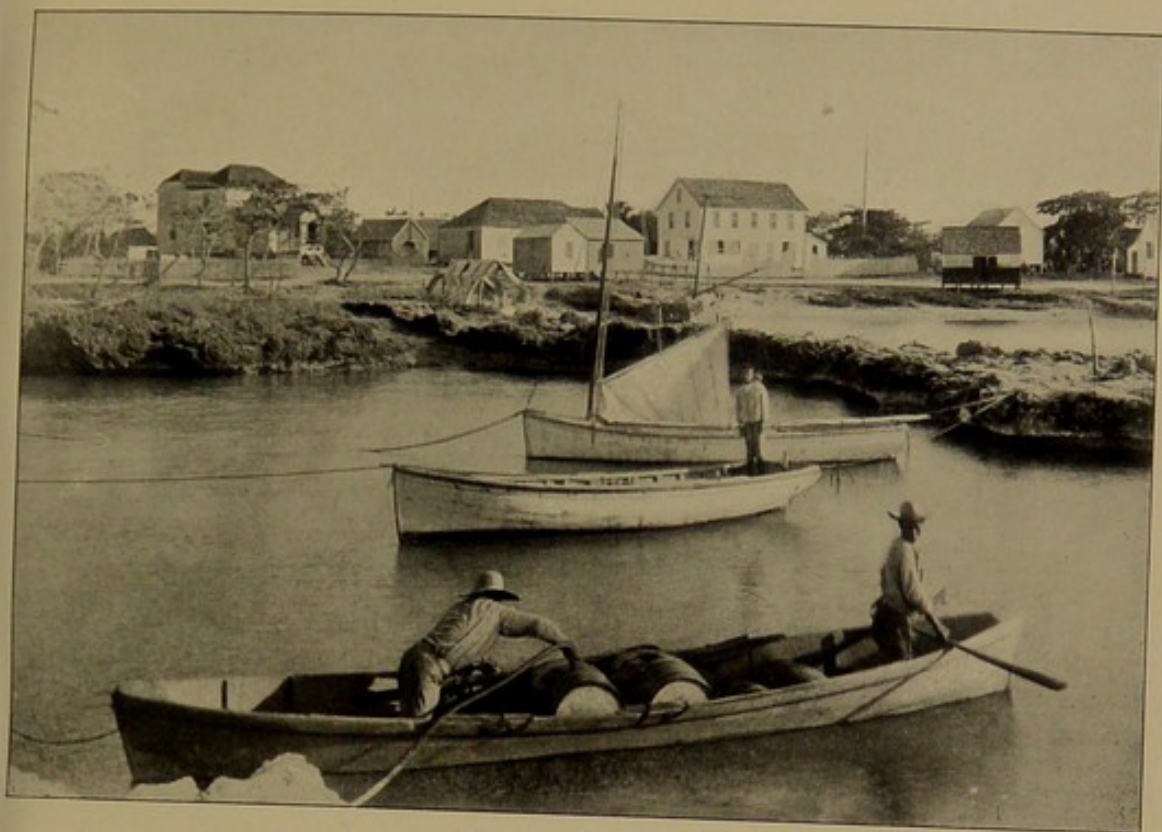
We found a place where board and lodging could be obtained, but it was clearly preferable that the doctor should live in his own house, if possible, so I merely arranged for taking my meals there for a few days and continued the search. Vacant houses are very scarce things in Grand Cayman owing to the rarity with which a family vacates its island home. The man of the family may indeed be absent for months at a time in the pursuit of his calling as a sailor or a fisherman; the house, however, remains inhabited by the wife and children. Eventually we came to a house which, even on a better knowledge of the place, appeared to be the only one both available and suitable, and it had in fact been previously let to a doctor.

This house deserves a description, not merely from the fact that it became my home for some time, but because it was a good sample of one of the better-class buildings in these Islands.

The fence round the house and the few flowers in front of it imparted that appearance of desirability generally wanting in dwellings which have their doors abutting on the road. The building itself, like most of its class in the West Indies, was built entirely of wood, and there were five rooms. One of these was retained by the owner's family as a storeroom for furniture and sundries which were not let with the house. The other four rooms with a sufficiency of furniture were let to me at a monthly rental of two pounds. There was also a kitchen which stood a few yards apart from the house, being connected with the back entrance by a slightly raised platform. The rent may seem dear for a house of this kind, but the price was not excessive for these parts.

It was a relief to have finished this transaction on the first day of my arrival, so that I could settle down at once. My things were now brought up from the customs-house, my meals being necessarily taken elsewhere for the present, until I could find a servant. This might be very hard to obtain in a place like Cayman, which is lightly





Landing Place at George Town, Grand Cayman.  
The large white building is the Court House.



The Doctor's House, Servant and Pony.







inhabited by residents of an independent turn of mind and contains practically no floating population; but a Jamaican mulatto, who happened to be out of employment, volunteered her services and remained with me while I was in Cayman.

Thus I had four rooms to dispose of, not counting the kitchen, which was handed over to my servant, Maggie. These four rooms were only just sufficient for my purposes and were assigned the following functions: The large room in front was the "dignity room," a small room behind was used as a dispensary and consulting-room, while the two remaining rooms were the bedroom and sitting-room respectively. Perhaps the term "dignity room" requires explanation. This room had evidently been the sitting-room of the family, but would not have suited me for that purpose. I should have been oppressed by the presence of that kind of furniture which some people think necessary to put in their best room, such as pictures of the family in their best clothes, wax flowers or fruits under a glass case, stuffed birds or fish, china dogs and ornaments of this description, and felt much more at home in the little sitting-room, almost empty except for a table and two or three chairs, where there was no opposing atmosphere to my own individuality.

The "dignity room," however, was far from useless, for the following reason. There are hardly any places, with the possible exceptions of the North and South poles, where everyone is socially equal. The situation is in some respects aggravated in the West Indies, where, in addition to the sad inequalities in mind, body, and estate with which we are but too familiar in the Old World, the people have another thrust upon them, that of colour, so that many otherwise consistent socialists, who would cheerfully share with others what they possess, scorn the contact of a skin darker than their own. Thus I found before long that the principal people of the place, who were white, or at least light-coloured, announced themselves at the front door and expected to sit down in the "dignity room" until I was ready to see them, while the poor black people were generally quite satisfied with presenting themselves at the back door, where they waited until they could be attended in the dispensary.

My small funds had been so strained by my recent purchases of medicines, instruments, saddle, &c., that on landing at Grand Cayman I had even beaten my record on the return to Mexico, having only two pounds left. The circumstances, however, were quite different here, for on presenting myself at the Court-house the Commissioner kindly asked me if I would like to draw my first month's salary, which was more than sufficient until my practice had become assured.

In an island where there are some five thousand people and no doctor except oneself the practice may be said to be ready made, so much so that it was necessary to attend a few urgent cases even before my medicines were unpacked.

A closer acquaintance with Grand Cayman proved it to be a somewhat unique place in the West Indies, as indeed it could hardly fail to be owing to its antecedents and surroundings. It had been originally populated by only a few families, whose offspring had multiplied to such an extent that about half the present population had only three surnames between them. Descending thus from such a limited



ancestry and being so isolated from the other British islands, the people had developed certain peculiarities. Those of white ancestry, who formed a much larger proportion than in the rest of the British West Indies, were tall and generally fair, and it may have been owing to their comparative proximity to the American continent that many of them spoke with a decided nasal accent. While through Jamaica they were politically connected with England, they were commercially connected with the United States, where many had made voyages either as sailors or in search of that employment so difficult to obtain at home.

Americanisms, however, may have been introduced among the white people from a feeling of pride in creating another distinction between them and the negroes, whose somewhat rude familiarity of manner, so prevalent among the anglicized West Indian Islands, was here held in check by the considerable number of white settlers of the working classes. In Cayman, indeed, is the most perfect attempt at a white settlement which the English have made in these parts. The success may not have been a brilliant one, but shows possibilities.

It is a remarkable fact that the negro in the West Indies, at any rate, does not speak with a nasal accent, while this peculiarity is occasionally found among the white people of some of the Islands, although in none to anything like the same extent as in Cayman. The suggestion that this peculiar intonation may be prized as a white monopoly is somewhat borne out by the line of demarcation between whites and blacks, which is more sharply defined in Cayman than in most other parts of the West Indies, as there are comparatively few of the intermediate or coloured class, and the white descendants of the early settlers have become an aristocracy which lines the sea front for about a mile on each side of the Court-house, while the negroes live in the bush behind.

Cayman islanders, as a rule, bear a good name as steady and law-abiding people, but have a propensity for deferring the payment of their debts which has been fostered by their mode of living. Thus, if a sailor is absent on a long voyage, he leaves his family on shore without sufficient money to buy them the necessities of life, which are furnished partly by the natural resources of their home and partly on the credit system. Everyone owns the piece of land on which his cottage is built, while the ground generally produces a sufficiency of the more hardy kinds of tropical vegetables. They generally have fowls or some domestic animals, and all the settlements are near the sea, where the boys learn to be expert fishermen at an early age.

There are, however, certain things which must be bought, and these are obtained at the stores on the credit system, being booked to the name of the absent man, who is expected to settle the account on his return. In order, however, to keep down the debts as much as possible, articles which in most places are required daily were here only used on great occasions. Bread was seldom eaten by the poorer people, and it was usual to drink a decoction of native herbs instead of tea or coffee. Thus, although there was no destitution and every one had enough to eat, there were a good many ailments which were aggravated by the continuance of an unsuitable diet. This was especially noticeable among the white women, who are not inclined



to be robust in tropical countries, and often looked pale and languid in their little homes, while the more hardy black women flourished on the same food and endured the heat of the sun.

The Cayman people made their own laws, and as imposts of some kind were necessary to support their Government, they only tolerated indirect taxation, so that a person in poor circumstances could live almost free from charge by abstaining from the articles taxed. They were determined that houses and land, which are such favourite objects of adverse legislation in some countries, should pay no duty, otherwise the impecunious possessors would often have been deprived of their homes. Most of the revenue came from *ad valorem* duties of about 5 per cent., and there was also a poll-tax of six shillings on every man between eighteen and sixty years of age.

In the whole civilized world there must be few places where people are so lightly taxed, and yet the cost of living for a better class person was at least as much as in many of the more heavily burdened West Indian islands, owing to increased charges in other respects. The price of food was greater for a stranger who could not live on the home-grown produce of the poorer islanders, especially as tinned provisions had to be bought frequently in the place of fresh meat, which was only obtainable once in the week. Labour also was dear, as the people were independent and had to be paid heavily for their services.

There were, however, a certain number of comparatively wealthy residents whom I used to divide into three classes—Merchant Princes, Vikings, and Grass Dukes, under which terms were comprised the storekeepers, the ship-owners, and those who had land and stock. Two or three of these occupations were sometimes combined, but those who depended on the last of these must have been less well off than the others owing to the generally poor quality of the land.

It may be noticed in the picture of the landing-place that there is a bare aspect about the country. This to a certain extent is characteristic of the smaller West Indian islands, which have but little surface soil and much outcrop of rock. But Grand Cayman was peculiarly unfortunate in this respect, for it is not so small, being described as seventeen miles in length, while the winding road along its southern coast, extending about thirty miles from the eastern to the western settlement, makes the dimensions appear much greater. Its breadth, however, is small in proportion, hardly exceeding six miles in the widest part. A good deal of the land remains in a state of nature, overgrown in places with dense scrub, while the more open parts show an abundant outcrop of rocks and stones interspersed with small pools of stagnant water, which the flatness of the ground prohibits from draining, thereby making the Island notorious for its mosquitoes.

In former times Grand Cayman, in common with many other West Indian islands, produced a good supply of coco-nuts, but more than fifty years ago a disease developed among the trees, which are now no longer cultivated owing to their sickly condition. Thus it is a rather curious anomaly that of the two principal exports of the Cayman Islands, turtle and coco-nuts, neither are the products of Grand Cayman or its shores, the turtle coming from the coast of



Central America and being merely brought to Cayman for subsequent exportation, while the coco-nuts are grown in Cayman Brac and Little Cayman.

The wind which blows from an easterly to a westerly direction in these parts has a marked effect on the vegetation. In the east of the Island the strong sea breeze will hardly allow trees to attain any size, and the aspect of the stunted bushes growing in the rocky ground produces a feeling of desolation. In return, however, the inhabitants of this part are protected to a great extent from the mosquitoes, which cannot hold out against a strong wind; while in the central, and still more in the western parts, the trees grow to a fair size, but the mosquitoes become troublesome. The only effectual way of keeping these pests out of the house is to have a fine netting, preferably of wire, over all apertures. This, however, entails trouble and expense, so that most people resort to smoke-fires at night.

There are no rivers, but the fairly heavy rainfall, sometimes as much as eighty inches, which is stored from the roofs of the houses, is sufficient for drinking purposes. There are, however, some wells, and in one of the settlements (East End) a supply of fresh water was discovered in a somewhat unusual manner. The residents noticed with surprise that the domestic animals used to drink what was apparently salt water on the reef. It was, however, fresh water which had run underneath the ground on a rocky bed and was thus discharging itself into the sea.

For some time after my arrival I found a considerable difficulty in finding a suitable bathing place, partly because the long straggling settlement hugs the shore so closely that it is difficult to find a retired spot, and partly from the jagged and friable nature of the coral-bound coast. The indispensable sergeant again became my guide, showing me a small sandy cove, called Smith's Barcadere, about a mile and a half from my house and just out of sight of the road. It was the best bathing place near the town and became my favourite resort. On leaving me to enjoy a swim the sergeant called out, "You may see one or two sharks, but they won't trouble you." While, however, the sharks on the Cayman shores are said to be of the less voracious kind, I never ventured far beyond my depth.

I soon found that the people were somewhat exacting in their treatment of the medical officer. Knowing that he received a Government subsidy out of their taxes, they affected to consider the doctor more or less as their hired servant. So that a man would sometimes ride in from an outlying settlement at an inconvenient hour, such as late in the afternoon, and instead of asking if it would be convenient to visit one of his sick relations, would be likely to say, "Doctor, I require you to visit my house at once." It was very important, however, that I should remain on good terms with the people, as the situation would have been impossible for an unpopular man, so I always obeyed the "requisition" as cheerfully as possible.

Finding that horse hire was expensive in Cayman, I spent five pounds on the purchase of a strong pony mare, which carried me on my visits from one end of the Island to the other. It was also very necessary to have saddle-bags for carrying my medicines, but there was no saddler's shop or store where such things could be



procured. My washerwoman offered to make them for me, so I gave her the canvas and borrowed a pair of saddle-bags as a pattern, with some misgivings about the result. She succeeded so well that, when I subsequently showed these bags to a saddler in London and remarked that they had been made by a black woman in the West Indies, he looked at me with surprise and said, "Do you mean to say that a black woman made them?" "Yes," I replied, "and she did not earn her living by sewing." "Why, they are beautifully made," he further remarked; "you would not get them done so well in London!"

One evening this same washerwoman invited me to what, for want of a better name, must be called "a hymn-singing party." Black people often have good voices and are fond of singing, a pastime which suits their joyous temperament. The greater part of the company consisted of girls and young women, with whom the sitting-room of the little house was crowded. As is usual in entertainments everywhere, the ostensible cause of the meeting was more or less an excuse for bringing the people together. The hymns, however, were given out and sung, one after the other, with short intervals between for rest and conversation. All the singing was done sitting down, after the manner prevalent among the Dissenters, whose forms of worship are almost universal here. The lady of the house presided with great decorum, and if any one of the few young men present so far forgot himself as to pay more attention to the girls than to the hymns, she gave him a vigorous tap on the shoulders with her fan, which effectually restrained any undue ardour. Most of the girls were either black or quite dark in colour and all were neatly attired in dresses of light washing material, trimmed with lace and ribbons.

Turtle fishing is the principal industry of Grand Cayman, and no description of the Island would be complete without some details of an occupation which affords a livelihood to so many of its inhabitants. The schooners used in this trade have generally a capacity of between thirty and fifty tons and the work is done on the share system. Thus the capitalist finds the ship and all accessories, such as sails and nets, while the captain and the crew provide the labour. The proceeds of the fishing are shared in equal proportions between capital and labour, the owner of the ship receiving one-half of the profit, while the other half belongs to the captain and the crew, who may number some seven or eight men. There is a large return for the money invested, perhaps twenty per cent., but a turtle ship is only calculated to last for twenty years.

Turtle are now becoming so scarce about the shores of the West Indian Islands, that in order to catch them in paying quantities it has become necessary to go as far west as the coast of Central America, in the regions of Honduras and Nicaragua. A glance at the map will show the advantage which this has given to the people of Grand Cayman, who are considerably nearer Central America than any of the other British West Indians. This advantage is enhanced by the perishable nature of a live turtle, which cannot endure being carried on its back for more than a week without danger to its life.

The procedure of the turtle fishers is somewhat after the following



manner. On leaving Grand Cayman the schooner chooses some likely place on the coast of Central America as the scene of operations. A suitable shoal or islet is now found for making a "crawl," which is the name given to the fenced-in piece of water in which the turtle already caught can be left to recruit. Two men are generally left in charge of the crawl, to watch that the turtle do not escape, and to feed them with a weed called "sea grass," while the rest of the crew continue fishing. The duration of the cruise may be determined by the capacity of the ship, the security of the crawl, the weather, the luck or other circumstances, but when the fishing comes to an end the turtle are taken out of the crawl and packed on their backs on board the schooner, which now commences the homeward voyage to Grand Cayman. Here the turtle are again crawled in a palisaded place, generally in or near the shallow water of the North Sound, while the fishers return to their homes for a well-earned rest. After an interval the turtle are again shipped and carried to a market, for at this time there was no means of selling them at home, although more recently a canning factory is said to have been established in the Island. The turtle used often to be sold in Kingston, Jamaica, for from thirty shillings to two pounds each, but the price has now become higher.

It will be seen that a life of this kind suits the Cayman islanders, who, while engaged in this occupation, are working for themselves, and in the long intervals between the voyages can enjoy living at home, which thus becomes a half-way house between the places of finding and selling the turtle.

Some may consider that the people of Cayman had no right to fish on coasts which do not form any part of the British possessions, and this in fact had lately been a cause of trouble, for as turtle became more valuable, the Governments of these countries resented the continual filching of what ought to have been a source of revenue to themselves, and began to make reprisals. Yet although it must be allowed that the islanders had no right whatever under the altered circumstances, their conduct was not so barefaced as it appears on first sight, for within the memory of the older inhabitants this right had been possessed by them in common with other British subjects.

England has been so quietly effacing herself in this part of the world that many people do not know that, until recent years, she held a protectorate over that large stretch of country called the Mosquito Coast, which lies in Honduras and Nicaragua, and which, in fact, comprises most of the shore over which the Cayman islanders fished. The ostensible reason for surrendering this protectorate may have been to please the republics of Central America, but it is more than probable that the true motive was a desire to conciliate the United States.

In the middle of the last century Nicaragua was, perhaps, more before the eyes of the world than it is now, as it was then thought that the two oceans would be connected by means of a canal communicating with both sides of the large lake in that Republic. Up to this time the British Government had not adopted the course of giving way to the United States, and as both countries were



very jealous about the ownership of the projected canal, it was stipulated by the Bulwer-Clayton treaty of 1850 that, "The Governments of Great Britain and the United States hereby declare that neither the one nor the other will ever obtain or maintain for itself any exclusive control over the said ship-canal." This appears to have been a last effort on the part of the British Government, for by treaties with Honduras in 1859, and with Nicaragua in 1860, the Mosquito Coast was surrendered to these Republics, and it is needless to refer to the fate of the "ship-canal."

From these facts it will be seen that the Cayman fishermen were now trespassing in places where they used to have a right to go, with the result that their schooners were sometimes seized and brought to the adjacent ports, where they were only liberated after much difficulty.

A comical story is told of one of these seizures, in which Americans took a leading part. A ship of that nationality was trespassing in this very region when an inoffensive-looking boat, covered with an awning, came from the shore to the ship's side. On removing the awning, the boat was found to be full of soldiers, who boarded the ship, upon which their officer informed the captain that he and his crew were prisoners and that the ship was to be taken to the neighbouring port. The captain gave way to armed force and asked the officer to have a drink with him before they made for land. The officer did not like to refuse so polite an invitation, but while they were having their drink below a signal was given, with the result that the ship's crew, who of course had arranged this line of conduct with their captain, appeared suddenly in the little cabin, armed with whatever offensive weapons they could muster. "Men," said the captain, "they want to take us prisoners and to bring us into port. Will you go or will you put up a fight?" "I think we'll put up a fight," was the answer. Thereupon the captain turned round to the officer and said, "I'll just give you five minutes to quit this ship." And the soldiers did so, for they were outnumbered.

In this unsettled period many people in Grand Cayman were uneasy about their relations during a protracted voyage. The question was referred to the Government in Jamaica, for it was very difficult to know whether some of the fishing places were within the shore limit or not. Our Commissioner, whose ideas were statesman-like, hoped that he might be sent to Central America to arbitrate with the Nicaraguan Government, in which case I was to accompany him as interpreter, and the prospect of such a journey at Government expense was delightful. It was, however, too good to come off. Eventually the matter was settled by allowing the Cayman people to fish in these foreign waters on condition of paying two shillings for every turtle they took away.

The islanders, however, have become so imbued with the idea that there are more advantages attached to the American than to the British flag that many have naturalized themselves as citizens of the United States. Nor is this surprising when it is borne in mind that Great Britain consents to have her own subjects rated as of less account than Americans. In the former volume it has been shown how any British subject who wishes to remain in the United States for



a few months must submit to an examination of insulting questions, such as whether he has lived in jails, almshouses, &c., while any American is good enough to live in British territory without being asked any such questions. In the same manner no British subject can become a captain or even a mate in the American mercantile marine, but all Americans are eligible to become officers in the British.

The Americans do not limit the term "protection" to the question of fiscal duties, but extend it to the preferential treatment of their own citizens, and thus people who live on the confines of British and American rule find it to their interest to belong to the latter nationality.

Would it be too much to ask our Government to reciprocate ?



## CHAPTER III.

## IN THE CAYMAN ISLANDS.

**W**ITHIN two months of my arrival in Grand Cayman I had become more or less accustomed to the situation, which, without excessive praise, may fairly be said to have been an improvement on any of the places tried in Spanish-America.

The work at headquarters, however, was the easiest part of the medical officer's routine, as by the regulations I was obliged to make periodical visits to the outlying settlements, and to visit occasionally the Islands of Cayman Brac and Little Cayman some seventy miles distant. At this juncture the Commissioner put the matter before me thus, in a friendly conversation: "If you visit the settlements every month you will wear yourself out, but if you only go once in three months the people may grumble." This, of course, suggested the answer that a round of visits every two months might meet the requirements of the case, and I made preparations for them at once.

These visits were always very troublesome, not so much on account of the distances, of which the furthest, at East End, was only twenty-two miles by road from George Town, but because no facilities were provided by the Government. There was no dispensary or consulting-room at any of the settlements. It was impossible to carry on horseback all the things I required, yet there were no carts in the Island, and the one or two buggies owned by people of the better class were not available. Eventually the matter was arranged thus. The sergeant told me that the correct procedure would be to ride up to the house of one of the principal settlers, with whom I could make an arrangement about board and lodging during my short visit, and that the patients would consult me at this house, except, of course, those who were so seriously unwell as to require attendance at their own homes. A negro was found who was willing to earn a good day's wages by carrying a box of the heavier drugs as far as Bodden Town, some twelve miles to the east of the capital; and when my work was finished here I should have to arrange with some one else to carry the box ten miles further to East End. I started on a Monday morning in heavy travelling order, with some of my more precious belongings in my saddle-bags, accompanied by the negro on foot, who was carrying the box of medicines.

Of course the coast line is by no means the shortest way from place to place, but the interior is absolutely undeveloped, and obstacles such as scrubs and swamps would have made a short cut difficult for



a man on foot and impossible for a horse. Even the main track runs in places through loose shingle, in which the horse sinks to the fetlock at every step, and occasionally the rocky nature of the ground forces the traveller right out on the beach. Here the grape trees grow almost to the water's edge, as in many other parts of the West Indies, while in a protected inlet there might be a small patch of mangrove scrub. A surviving coco-nut palm lingered in places, but trees as a rule do not show to their best along the sea-front, with the exception of the almond tree, which only started growing some thirty years ago, and is prized in the settlements for its fine shade.

Rather more than halfway between George Town and Bodden Town is a little settlement called Prospect, inhabited chiefly by white people of a better class, where a short halt was made, after which the road turns slightly inland, through a patch of rather pretty park-like country, before coming out again on the sea-front near Bodden Town. This settlement is more compactly built than George Town, although still rather a straggling one. The road through that part which lies next the shore is ankle-deep in sand, but those cottages which are built back from the sea-front have good paths leading to them. At one of these places where I had been instructed to ask for shelter I rode up, and, introducing myself to the lady of the house, soon came to terms with her about my requirements. The pony was now put out on grass, the box of medicines unpacked, and the negro who had carried it was paid and dismissed. News of my arrival had circulated quickly, causing a good many patients to present themselves without delay.

My experience in makeshifts for dispensing medicines in remote places in Mexico stood me in good stead here. The people of the house cleared a table for me and provided a jug of water, various cups, mugs and bowls to aid in mixing the drugs, spoons for measuring the doses, while the back of a plate and an old knife which had lost its edge became efficient implements for incorporating the ingredients which were to be mixed with vaselin in the form of ointment. Of course I carried my scales for weighing solids, and a small measure for the more potent liquids, such as tinctures, but the water was ladled out in a tablespoon. After seeing one batch of patients I generally mixed their remedies before attending to other people, and for one or two hours might be occupied in the mysteries of making medicines, lotions and ointments with the inferior appliances at hand. This part of my work was done with my shirt sleeves rolled up and alone, for it might not have represented the medical officer in a dignified aspect, and when all was finished I used to request the lady of the house to clean the table and the other accessories before beginning afresh. I might be thus occupied for one day and part of the next, by which time everyone who wanted to see me had generally put in an appearance. It was then time to pack up again and to go to the most remote settlement, East End, some ten miles further on. There are a few straggling cottages on the roadside for the first two or three miles after leaving Bodden Town, after which the country becomes quite uninhabited. Up to now there had not been any decided decrease in the vegetation, but on nearing East End the aforesaid effects of the strong Atlantic



wind, blowing from an easterly to a westerly direction, become more apparent in the stunted appearance of the trees, while the rocks and stones are more conspicuous, imparting an aspect of desolation. The road also becomes worse, and the few buggies in the Island seldom travel east of Bodden Town.

The procedure at East End was a repetition of that before described. I rode up to a house which was likely to afford me the required accommodation, introduced myself as the medical officer and was made welcome. It was curious to notice how even this remote place followed the lines generally laid down in the more populous parts of the world with reference to the comforts of civilization becoming more scarce in proportion to the distance from the capital. George Town contained some fairly good stores in which the deficiency of native products could be largely supplemented by preserved food. In Bodden Town there was a great falling off in this respect, while in East End the commonly called necessities of life were considered luxuries, and if your arrival is unexpected you will probably have to take your meal without bread. The people, however, were very civil, and promised me delicacies of this kind on the next day. My work here lasted about two days, after which I left East End on Saturday and returned home towards nightfall, having been absent for six days. The chief discomforts of these expeditions consisted in having to live in other people's houses, and the necessity of eating unaccustomed food.

After a well-earned rest of one or two days I next went to West Bay, the most westerly settlement, about seven miles from George Town along the sea coast. This, however, was an easy trip, as by starting early in the morning I could see my patients on the same day and return home in the evening. Some of my work in this scattered settlement led me to places inland where the country was more open than in other parts, having fair-sized patches of grazing land and large trees, but as this part of the Island is the most sheltered the mosquitoes are greatly to be dreaded.

These periodical medical visits were appreciated by the patients more than by the doctor. The amount of deferred payments in the out-settlements was even greater than in the capital, so that after a week's hard work I returned poorer in cash than when I started, most of the ready money brought with me having been spent in such necessities as board, lodging, and portage, while the greater part of the earnings were booked to people at a distance, of whose paying propensities I had no means of judging.

There was now only one other settlement to visit. This place being situated on the north side of the Island was most appropriately called North Side. I had twice almost started on this journey but had been deterred each time by being told that the track was under water in places and that a horse would hardly be able to travel. Eventually, feeling that if this settlement could not be reached on horseback, some other means of locomotion ought to be obtained, I arranged for a passage in a canoe. This journey is worth describing owing to its unique character. The most narrow dimension of the Island lies in the space between George Town and the northern coast immediately opposite it. Here there is a large inlet called



North Sound, which so nearly bisects Grand Cayman that it only measures two miles across. North Sound is connected with the capital by almost the only good road, which there were special reasons for making here for the purpose of connecting the northern with the southern coast, and thus making access to the capital easy for the people from North Side, who left their canoes at North Sound and had only two miles to walk. North Sound itself was an important locality in Grand Cayman, as it was in the shelter of this bay that the turtle schooners were often moored, and the turtle themselves were "crawled" at the edge of its shallow shore by means of stakes driven into the water, so that the turtle could recruit themselves after their long voyage from Central America without being able to escape from the enclosure.

The canoe men carried my things along the road to the canoe which had been beached at the edge of the Sound. This place, being in sheltered and shallow water, was lined with mangrove scrub, and indeed it may be said to have been lined with mosquitoes as well, as they attacked us so fiercely during the few minutes while we were getting the canoe ready that we were glad to leave. A good breeze sprang up when we had paddled well out into the Sound and in a short time all our winged tormentors were blown away.

Soon after we had hoisted a small sail, however, a sudden squall came on, as is not infrequent in the hurricane season, causing the gunwale of the canoe to be depressed to the level of the water, through which we rushed along at a racing speed for a short distance. In so unstable a craft as a canoe the situation was rather exciting, and I noticed with satisfaction that the shore was not more than half a mile distant and that part of the way lay in shallow water. The squall, however, ceased almost as quickly as it had begun, and before we reached the entrance of the Sound the wind had fallen to such an extent that the sail was taken down and the men began to use the paddles again. Near the mouth of the Sound we passed through a passage between the mangroves where the sea looked like a river with bushes growing on either side of it, although of course the scrub had taken root under the shallow water. When we turned to the right, round the northern coast, the water near the shore became so shallow that the men abandoned their paddles and began to punt with poles, and on arriving within two or three miles of the settlement, two of the men got out of the canoe in order to tow it along the shore by means of a rope. Thus in a voyage of only a few hours we had sailed, paddled, punted and towed.

The routine at North Side was the same as at the other places, although this settlement was not on a par with those previously visited, the people being apparently of a poorer class.

My departure from here was hastened by a most unexpected letter from the Commissioner, informing me that a boy had been killed and that I was to go at once to the scene of the accident. Everything was facilitated for the journey, as I was now acting under the immediate orders of the supreme authority. A canoe was at my disposal to carry me part of the way back and, at a certain landing-place not far from the entrance of the Sound, a horse and guide were waiting to bring me to the southern side of the Island,



about six miles across by the track which we followed. This part of the country presented the appearance of a rather scrubby forest through which a clearing had been made, but the ground, although rather rocky in places, was fairly well grassed and by no means barren. There were, however, no houses in sight until we reached the end of the journey, where perhaps the most fertile ground in the Island is situated, being in fact in the neighbourhood of that park-like land before mentioned, between Prospect and Bodden Town.

The unfortunate boy had been killed in a most unusual manner. He had been riding bareback with no other head-piece on the horse except a halter, the other end of which was attached by means of a rope round the rider's body, and, when the boy fell off, the frightened animal ran away, dragging his former rider along the stony ground, when such injuries were inflicted that death must have been instantaneous. This was the only case of violent death while I was here.

The people of Cayman Brac now wished for a visit from the Government Medical Officer. This meant a sea journey of seventy miles with a considerable interval before my return, for there is only irregular communication. Availing myself therefore of a schooner of about thirty tons, I embarked with my medicines and instruments for this far-away place. On the following day the wind failed when we had almost reached Little Cayman, so the sailors, getting into a boat, towed the schooner to within a short distance of land. The ship was then anchored and we went on shore, until the wind sprang up again. This Island, on a smaller scale, bears some resemblance to Grand Cayman. It is about seven miles long and is very lightly inhabited, being chiefly used as a coco-nut plantation by the people of Cayman Brac. After a few hours here the wind freshened, and we soon reached Cayman Brac, which is only seven miles distant. We put in at Stake Bay, the capital, although quite a little settlement, where the chief Government buildings, such as the Court-house and the post-office, are situated. The Collector of Customs is the principal person here, or indeed in all the Island, and I was very glad to find that he was willing to receive me in his house, otherwise I should have had great difficulty in finding a suitable lodging.

Cayman Brac, although not much larger than Little Cayman, is of considerably greater importance, containing a population of about one thousand people. The formation of its low and stony coast-line is somewhat remarkable, having a gradual rise of perhaps two yards in height from the water's edge, and a partial fall of the same kind on the inland side. On the curve of this limited area, which consists of rock, stone and shingle, grows a thick fringe of coco-nut palms which seem to prefer this barren-looking site to places inland apparently much more fertile. The graceful foliage of these trees gives a pleasing appearance to the shores of Cayman Brac, which, together with Little Cayman, has been fortunate enough to escape the disease which has ruined this industry in the larger Island. The road connecting the settlements, which here also lie on the coast, passes through this very fringe of coco-nut trees and is much better travelling ground than in Grand Cayman.

The smaller size of Cayman Brac made the work of visiting



patients much less tiring by enabling me always to return to headquarters at night, besides which the genial Collector at whose house I was living often accompanied me on my visits.

Towards the centre of this Island there is a high table-land which goes by the name of The Bluff. It rises abruptly in a precipitous wall of rock, but in some places the ascent can be made easily by time-worn tracks. This high land ought to be the most healthy locality, yet no one lived there, the reason presumably being that so many journeys up and down would have been troublesome. Much as I should have liked to explore The Bluff I never got beyond its edge, for the following reason: According to the regulations I was entitled to a travelling allowance of ten shillings per diem from the revenue of Cayman Brac while in that Island, and I was naturally apprehensive that the people might resent my absenting myself, even for a few hours, in a place where I could not readily have been found.

After some three weeks' residence my work appeared to have come to an end, and I felt certain that the people in Grand Cayman were expecting my return, but no ship of any kind was going in that direction. Finding at last a schooner of only nine tons which was about to make the voyage, I braved the discomforts of a rough sea in this tiny craft rather than displease my employers. The sailors considerably gave me the use of the only chair on board, but the deck was so small that, when the tiller had to be put about sharply, my seat was found to be in the way and I was obliged to lie on a bag of coco-nuts. We reached George Town on the following day, by which time I felt so weak from the effects of the voyage that I made a hurried escape to my house.

Before leaving the schooner, however, I heard a most unwelcome piece of news. Someone had been so unwell during my absence that a schooner had just been sent to Cayman Brac for the express purpose of bringing me away, but had passed without our sighting each other. When therefore I reached home and threw myself on my bed, I knew that my rest would be of short duration. And so it proved, as a relation of the ailing person soon called to ask for a visit, which in my position as medical officer it was impossible to refuse. I staggered to my feet and put a thermometer into my pocket. It fell on the ground and broke. The same fate happened to another one. My small supply would not stand many losses of this kind, so feeling too languid to investigate the cause I put the third thermometer into another pocket, where it remained safely. Fortunately the visit was not so troublesome as I expected, and on my return home I enjoyed the rest of those who have escaped from a nine-ton boat on an angry sea. On the next day I investigated the cause of the breakages. In my pocket there was a minute hole through which the instruments had promptly worked their way.

For some time I now enjoyed the simple comforts of my little home, and limited as are the luxuries of George Town they are far superior to those of the outlying settlements. It was generally possible to have eggs for breakfast, fish might be the staple of my mid-day meal and a tin of preserved meat often appeared on the dinner table, as fresh meat could only be had once in the week. Milk and bread were also obtainable, but there was



a great dearth of vegetables except those of the commonest kind, and such things as cabbage, cauliflower or green-peas were practically never seen. I suggested that a Chinaman ought to be sent from Jamaica, with the title of "Government vegetable officer," allowing him a subsidy, besides what he could make out of selling his vegetables, but was told that so few people would buy these desirable articles of diet that the result would not be a success.

My official duties often brought me in contact with the Commissioner, and whatever anxiety I might have had about being able to satisfy this great personage disappeared on a short acquaintance, as his manner was uniformly genial. The term Commissioner is used to designate the official in charge of a smaller territory than that over which a Governor presides, but equally with a Governor he is the Monarch's representative and stands alone in his supreme elevation. In fact in some respects a Commissioner's lot is more trying in its solitude. The Governor of a large colony usually brings with him other officials, to some of whom, as old acquaintances, he can unbend himself, while the Commissioner of a small dependency probably arrives alone and has to be very careful about becoming familiar with unknown subordinates, who are generally natives of the district. It was, perhaps, this very sense of solitude which caused the Commissioner to talk with me on unofficial matters, as we were almost the only outsiders in the Island, the other inhabitants being either natives or residents for years. We were both fresh importations, although at somewhat different ends of the social scale, in which the Commissioner represented the master while the doctor was looked upon as the servant at the disposition of anyone at any time. Rare indeed were the occasions when any of his subjects would dare to speak otherwise than respectfully to the Commissioner, and a slight attempt in this direction was promptly checked by him.

Thus on a certain occasion one of the white aristocrats, who from the smallness of his means must have been only a Grass Duke and not one of the more wealthy Merchant Princes or Vikings, paid a visit to the Commissioner. The Grass Duke, after a few introductory words, remarked in the same patronizing way which he would have adopted towards the medical officer: "You are getting a fine salary out of us." This was hardly the procedure to observe towards the King's representative, who is rumoured to have replied: "What the devil do you mean, sir?" and the visit came to an untimely end.

Among the great events which happen in Cayman are the sessions at the Court-house. If there is a case of unusual importance a lawyer sometimes comes over from Jamaica, but the greater part of the work is done by local "law agents," who, without professional training, are allowed to practise on payment of a small fee, as the Island cannot afford the luxury of resident solicitors. My duties generally prevented me from being present, but I managed to see a few of the cases, which were interesting as affording incidental information.

A man was prosecuted for house-breaking. This must be a very rare offence in Cayman, where the doors of the houses are frequently left open and where, as a rule, there is little worth stealing.



It may not be unusual for a house-breaker to leave some of his clothing behind, in the urgency of his departure, but he rarely returns on the following day for his shoes, as this man did. Apparently the jury thought that a person who returns for his shoes cannot be a house-breaker, and they therefore acquitted him.

Among the civil cases was an action brought by one of the storekeepers to recover damages for wine spoilt on the passage from Jamaica to Cayman. Owing to the bottles having been exposed on a wet deck, it was stated that the corks had been injured and that enough salt water and dirt had entered to spoil the contents. The corked bottles were handed round to the jury, who looked solemnly at them, but as none of the wine was sampled it must have been hard to know whether it was damaged or not. In any case the jury must have considered that bottles of wine ought not to have been left in places which were washed with sea water, so some damages were allowed.

The principal case of the session, however, was one about land, and illustrated in a remarkable manner the primitive customs of the place. Some of the original settlers appear to have been in the habit of asserting a title to their land by "tracking it out," that is to say, by making marks on the trees growing round a certain space to designate that all within it belonged to them. It was the custom now for the neighbours to meet every few years for the purpose of refreshing these marks on the trees, so that there might be no doubt about the boundaries. A person of a dubious turn of mind had, however, adopted the unusual plan of refreshing his landmarks privately, without the concurrence of his neighbours, and his uncertainties had always tended in the same direction, that of making his boundaries further apart and consequently curtailing those of others. One of the neighbours whose land had been most encroached upon brought an action in consequence, and the case excited much interest owing to its exclusively local nature. Eventually the expanding property was reduced to its original limits.

The Commissioner, besides acting as judge in the Court-house, presided at those meetings when the representatives of the people assembled to frame their own laws. This assembly consisted chiefly of white men, although there were some coloured and even one or two black men among them. Here also it was very desirable that the Commissioner should have some legal knowledge, for occasionally a representative wanted to make a law which was at variance with the common law of England, in which case the proposed statute could not become valid.

Our ruler could also exercise a good deal of influence by suggesting improvements which might not occur to some of the representatives, who were rather inclined to remain in an antiquated groove instead of going with the times. It was, indeed, surprising to hear that the suggestion of a regular steam communication between Jamaica and Grand Cayman was received with a certain amount of opposition; but from the point of view of the Vikings it was a dangerous innovation, as up to now their ships had done all the carrying trade and they were apprehensive that a steamer might take part of this from them. The Commissioner, however, was a



tactful man, and when he found that the representatives did not like an improvement he gave way gracefully. One of the numerous plans which he had for the advancement of the Island was to publish a few representative photographs. Prominent among these was to be the ship-building industry, which afforded almost the only permanent occupation on land, for the Cayman people were known to be good builders and could readily sell their ships, most of which were of small size, although occasionally one of two or three hundred tons was in construction.

Another photograph was to represent the turtle fishing, and hearing that some turtle which had been "crawled" in North Sound were being taken on board ship to be carried to market, I started with the camera for the field of action. The sergeant accompanied me to the water's edge, where we embarked in a little canoe which had been beached here, and punted along for a few hundred yards to where the turtle had been enclosed by a fence of stakes driven into the shallow water at the edge of the mangrove scrub. The scene was typical of its kind. The captain of the schooner was just outside the palisade in his boat, which was nearly full of turtle, while another boat was in readiness for loading as soon as the first one should be full. One or two negroes were wading about in some three or four feet of water in the crawl, for the purpose of catching the turtle and bringing them to the boat. It was impossible to erect the camera in a rickety canoe, so I asked the captain if he would allow me the use of the empty boat for a few minutes, but he was not obliging enough to consent, alleging that he was pressed for time. Under such unfavourable circumstances my attempt was not very successful.

A third representative photograph narrowly escaped being the cause of considerable bitterness, the situation only being saved by that ready adaptation to circumstances which was the characteristic of our ruler.

Among the white families there were several girls who possessed undeniably good looks, which the Commissioner rightly thought were a valuable asset not to be hidden from the outer world. Accordingly he asked me to bring my camera to one of the principal houses, in order to photograph a group of three girls who were to represent the beauty of the Island. To what extent these types were selected by him or by others is unknown to me, but we were equally surprised to find that there were no less than seven awaiting us. The dilemma was serious, as these young ladies belonged to the principal families of the place, and to have rejected four out of the seven would have caused resentment towards the families of the accepted ones and even towards the Commissioner himself. This was the only time I ever saw the great man look anxious. He approached me while I was arranging the camera and asked hurriedly, "Can you make them all fit in?" And on being told that this could be done, he added in a low but decisive tone, "Better take the lot." In my opinion the graceful girl standing to the right in the second row is most entitled to the palm of beauty, but the judgment of a doctor will never carry the same weight as that of a Commissioner.

Before I had been six months in the Cayman Islands I received news which would necessitate my return to Europe. An interest of



some value which appeared to belong to me, could not be turned to any account during my absence. It looked as if a better fate might be in store for me than knocking about from hand to mouth in various parts of the world, a mode of life hard at any period, and of a breakdown nature after a certain age. My first step was to inform the Commissioner with a view to giving three months' notice of my intended resignation. The Commissioner suggested that I might ask the Government for leave of absence, in which case the post might be kept open for me until my return. This advice was kindly meant, but did not suit my views, for if leave of absence were granted I should be bound in honour to return, and if my expectations were realized I did not want to do so.

Shortly afterwards the Commissioner gave me some news which might well have induced me to change my mind, by informing me that the Government was thinking about amalgamating the offices of Commissioner and doctor, and he was of opinion that if I were to apply for the dual appointment I might have a chance of getting it, as being already on the spot in one of these capacities. The idea of such an elevation was enough to turn one's head. It has been remarked in the former volume that some of my adventures were rather like those of Don Quixote and Sancho Panza, and now I had a chance of rivalling the ambition of the latter in being made the Governor of an island. It cost me a pang to persist in my resignation, but after the lapse of a few years I still think it was for the best. Perhaps the Government might have looked favourably upon an application which was backed up by the wishes of the people, for shortly afterwards a leading man informed me that, if I had not resigned, he had intended to propose at the next Court-house meeting that I should be made Commissioner-doctor. There were, however, many reasons why the appointment would not have been for my good.

In the first place, this innovation had been made on the score of economy. The Commissioner would still remain the doctor, and would not be likely to be promoted to an appointment in the former capacity only. In the next place, I had no legal knowledge, and should probably have blundered more than the aforesaid Sancho if any abstruse cases had been put before me. And lastly, but by no means least, the appointment was somewhat anomalous for reasons which may be surmised from the time-honoured treatment of Commissioner and doctor in these Islands. The former had always been looked upon as the master and the latter as the servant. To use the words of a local official who was discussing the appointment, "Do you mean to say that the Commissioner, the highest judicial authority in the Island, is to be brought out on a wet night to see a poor devil who has no shoes on his feet?" And this might mean a ride of twenty miles.

The principle that the less is contained in the greater harmonizes better in geometry than in human life, where it stands out as a protesting minority. Perhaps a newcomer might succeed in merging the doctor into the Commissioner, but it would be much harder for a person who had only been known previously in his lesser capacity, which would induce his former patients to look upon him as their servant rather than their master.





"Commandeered three types of the Island's beauty,  
But seven appeared from a sense of duty."

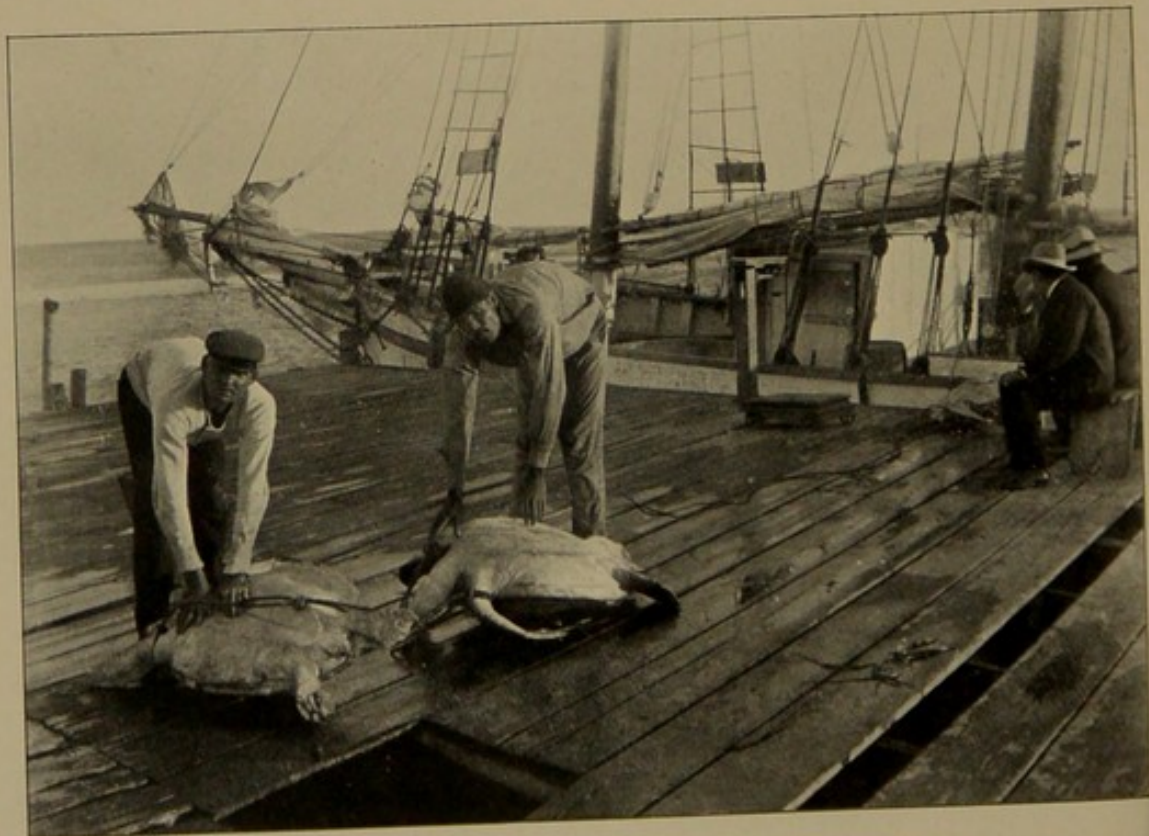


Ship-building in Grand Cayman.





Cottages and People at South Sound, three miles from George Town.



Schooner "Rainbow" discharging Turtle at Kingston, Jamaica.



In any case my resignation had been sent in, and my term of office would come to a close within three months. My spirits went up at the prospect of a more comfortable life, for although my residence here had not been exactly unhappy, it had been somewhat cheerless, and the work, which was not hard, with the exception of the tiring periodical visits to the settlements, was made much more irksome than it need have been by the peremptory manner of some of the people. If a person were not continually reminded that he was at the disposal of the public, at any hour, the Island could have been made a fairly comfortable place to live in, with the important exception of the three months when the mosquitoes were at their worst. Some people, however, seemed to become inured to this discomfort, and when an old lady, speaking enthusiastically of her native land, compared it to "an earthly paradise," I felt inclined to paraphrase Dickens, by replying, "Which but for mosquitoes it would be."

When the time came round for the last of my periodical visits, I set out in quite a light-hearted manner for the tiring week's work along the southern coast, when for even a continuous ride of ten or twelve miles between the settlements required more than three hours, owing to the heavy nature of the ground and the load of medicines in the saddle-bags, while, if one were called in to some outlying cottage, the journey might be protracted indefinitely. On these occasions, when it is long after meal-time, a feeling of faintness is apt to come over a person who goes out from shelter into the tropical glare of the sun. Many of the people seemed sorry to hear that I was leaving, and while compounding my last medicines and ointments with my sleeves rolled up I wondered whether such a procedure would be consistent for my successor,<sup>1</sup> the King's representative, or whether the Government would consider it more dignified to provide him with a dispenser.

Some troublesome delay used to be caused at the settlements by people presenting themselves just as I was leaving, and giving as an excuse that they had only just heard of my arrival. In order to prevent a repetition of this at East End I determined to send a boy through the settlement to announce my arrival by blowing a conch. This large shell, when skilfully blown, makes a noise something like the blast of a horn, and is often used in Cayman to give notice of the arrival of a ship.

For this purpose a big negro lad was selected, whom I made rehearse a few blasts, promising him a shilling for going through the settlement and repeating these lines in the intervals between sounds of the conch :—

"The doctor has come, so do not delay him,  
He can only attend to those who pay him ;  
I'm sent to blow my conch and to holler,  
Advice and medicine will cost you a dollar."

Unfortunately, however, the negro was quite unable to remember the lines, and a sharp little coloured girl who was listening made matters worse by repeating them incorrectly, thus :—

"The doctor will blow his conch and holler."

<sup>1</sup> The dual appointment was not a success, and the two offices have since been separated.



This was too much for professional dignity, even in remote Cayman, and, feeling that such a procedure might be construed as "infamous" by the Medical Council, I abandoned the idea of teaching any set phrase, merely telling the boy to announce my arrival.

On this farewell visit I made a vigorous effort to be paid in cash, and so far succeeded that I returned to George Town with a little more money than when I left it.

My notice of resignation had now lapsed and I was no longer the Government Medical Officer, but there was no opportunity for returning to Jamaica before another three weeks. The time was now my own, so I went to South Sound, about three miles easterly along the coast road, to photograph some cottages in this little settlement. Several of my former patients who lived here made me welcome in their homes. In one of these, while I was talking to the people, a big girl began to play on what is popularly called a mouth organ. Her lively music incited two other girls to dance on the good wooden floor, which is generally to be found in Cayman cottages. The example was so irresistible that in a short time I was also dancing and enjoying myself more than I had ever expected to do in the Island. My partner was a tall, nice-looking girl, about five feet nine inches in height, and as straight as a dart. In the photograph of the cottages she may be seen in the foreground to the right. On relating this adventure to the Commissioner I remarked, "Commissioner, this is the only time I have ever had an advantage over you. One could not imagine the King's representative dancing in a Cayman cottage to the music of a mouth-organ, but the doctor may do it because he is nobody."

It would be out of place to enlarge on the many ways in which the Commissioner advanced the good of the Island, as these have been chronicled in the Blue-books and may entitle him one day to the supreme authority in some more important place, but it may be permitted to append these few lines in token of the appreciation of the manner in which he discharged his manifold functions, and surmounted trials which might have proved fatal to a less gifted man.

### THE TRIALS OF THE COMMISSIONER.

The Commissioner had State work to arrange  
Of deepest import, and he wanted a change,  
So he jumped in a ship and said, "I'll take a  
Nice little trip to Kingston, Jamaica";  
But the Governor's words caused him much pain:  
"Sir, you will be good enough to explain  
The reason you left your island commission;  
On no account leave without my permission.  
Go back, and if this again should befall  
I'll commission you to a turtle crawl."  
The Commissioner took a speedy flight,  
Returned to his island at dead of night,  
And won his subjects' sincerest applause  
By happy decisions and splendid laws,



Got a new emission of postage stamps,  
Suggested an increase of light-house lamps,  
Made laws against snakes, of which lately a host  
Were imported in wood from Africa's coast ;  
Made a pair of post-offices in West Bay,  
So that each rival claimant had his own way ;  
Commandeered three types of the island's beauty,  
But seven appeared from a sense of duty—  
"Where all are so fair to whom shall be given  
The palm? By Jove, I must take the whole seven."  
Then the shares of a ship made such a bother,  
Half wished to go one way and half the other ;  
The Commissioner sadly shook his head,  
"It's a wicked and weary world," he said ;  
"Even Solomon could do nothing here,  
For to halve a big ship costs far too dear.  
The Court decrees that the strongest win the case,  
And that the weakest must go—right about face."

A land where one has lived for nearly a year must have very miserable associations if it entails no sorrow to say good-bye to it, probably for ever. And the Cayman Islands, with all their shortcomings, will still have a friendly remembrance in my mind for the sake of the shelter they afforded me at a critical period.

I disposed of my few possessions, selling the pony for the same price which had been paid for her, and giving most of the kitchen utensils to the faithful Maggie, who had remained with me until the end.

A schooner was going to leave on a certain day if everything was ready. Fortunately I had packed up over night, for at seven in the morning the captain sent word that he was going to start almost immediately. My luggage was sent on to North Sound, near which place the schooner was being loaded with turtle, and, after a hurried good-bye to the Commissioner and a few other friends, I was driven across the narrow part of the Island in a buggy by its owner, who was also going to Jamaica. On arriving at North Sound we got into a large boat and were rowed a few miles to where the schooner was being loaded with turtle, which had been "crawled" in a creek to the west of the Sound, as the "Rainbow," of some forty-six tons, was manned by a West Bay crew. The work was almost finished by the time we arrived, the full number of turtle being about one hundred and forty, all packed on their backs at the bottom of the ship. Some of their heads and necks projected into our sleeping compartment making me apprehensive at first that they might have some repulsive, fishy smell; but this was not the case, and, when not looking at them, one might have forgotten their existence, except when they made that sound like a deep sigh, so peculiar to turtle.

With the best treatment possible, a voyage in these small ships, built only for fishing and without the ordinary comforts of life, cannot be anything but uncomfortable. In these parts the wind is seldom favourable for an easterly course; thus six days and a half passed before we arrived at Kingston. During the first half of the voyage I was not able to eat much, and even during the latter half I felt little



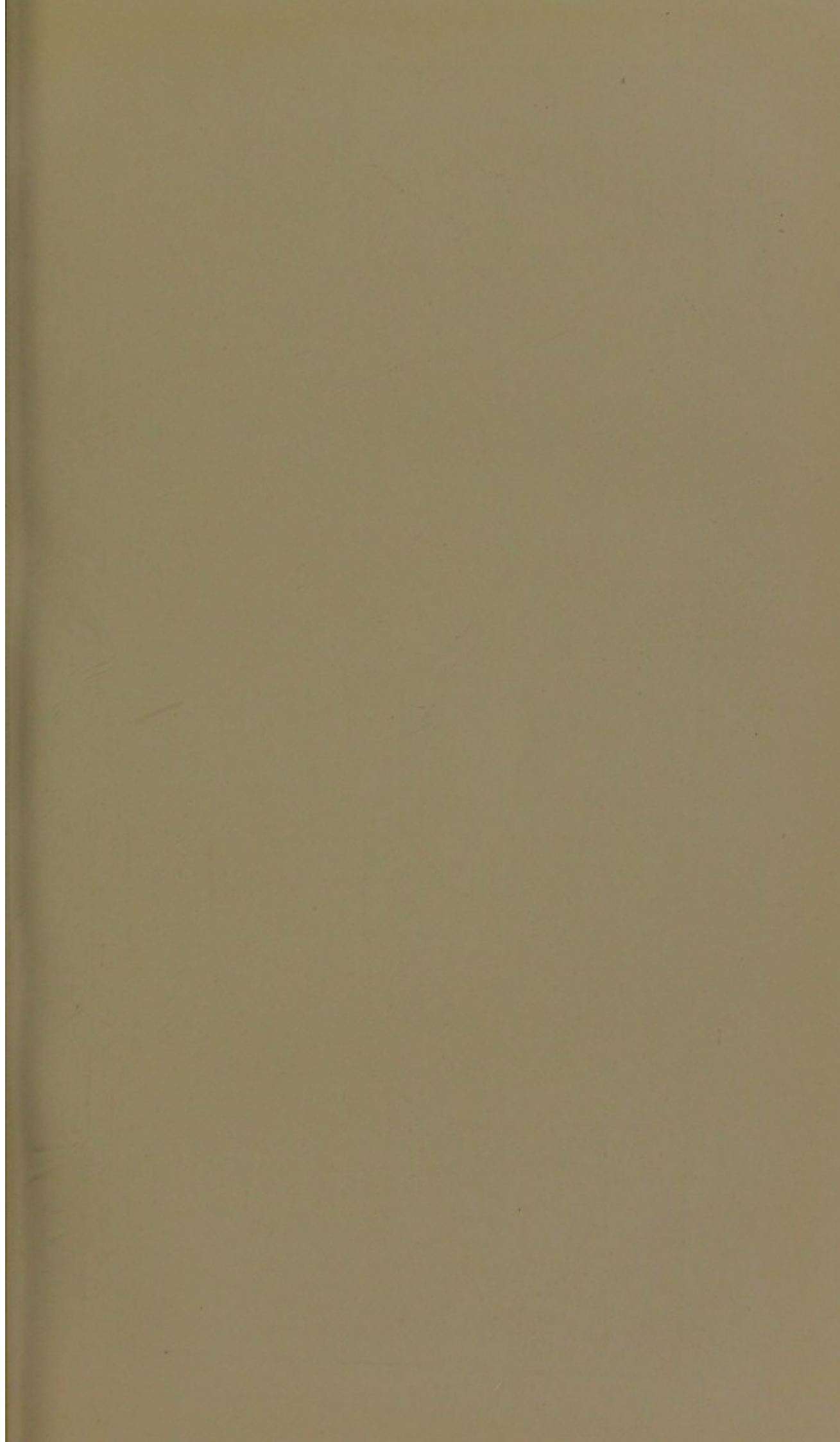
inclined for the coarse food of the sailors, who were almost all white, or at least light-coloured men.

When we were near the end of the journey it was interesting to see one of the sailors giving the live cargo water to drink by inserting the long spout of a can into the mouth of a turtle, which could be seen gulping down the liquid in spite of its uncomfortable dorsal position. These creatures, as already stated, do not well endure being kept on their backs for more than a week, and had now been in that position for about six days. Any loss, therefore, would have fallen in part upon the sailors, as partners under the share system. On arriving at Kingston, just before Christmas, the ship discharged its cargo at a wharf which was practically a roofed turtle crawl, being palisaded at the sides so that the creatures could not escape after being dropped through a trap-door into the enclosure.

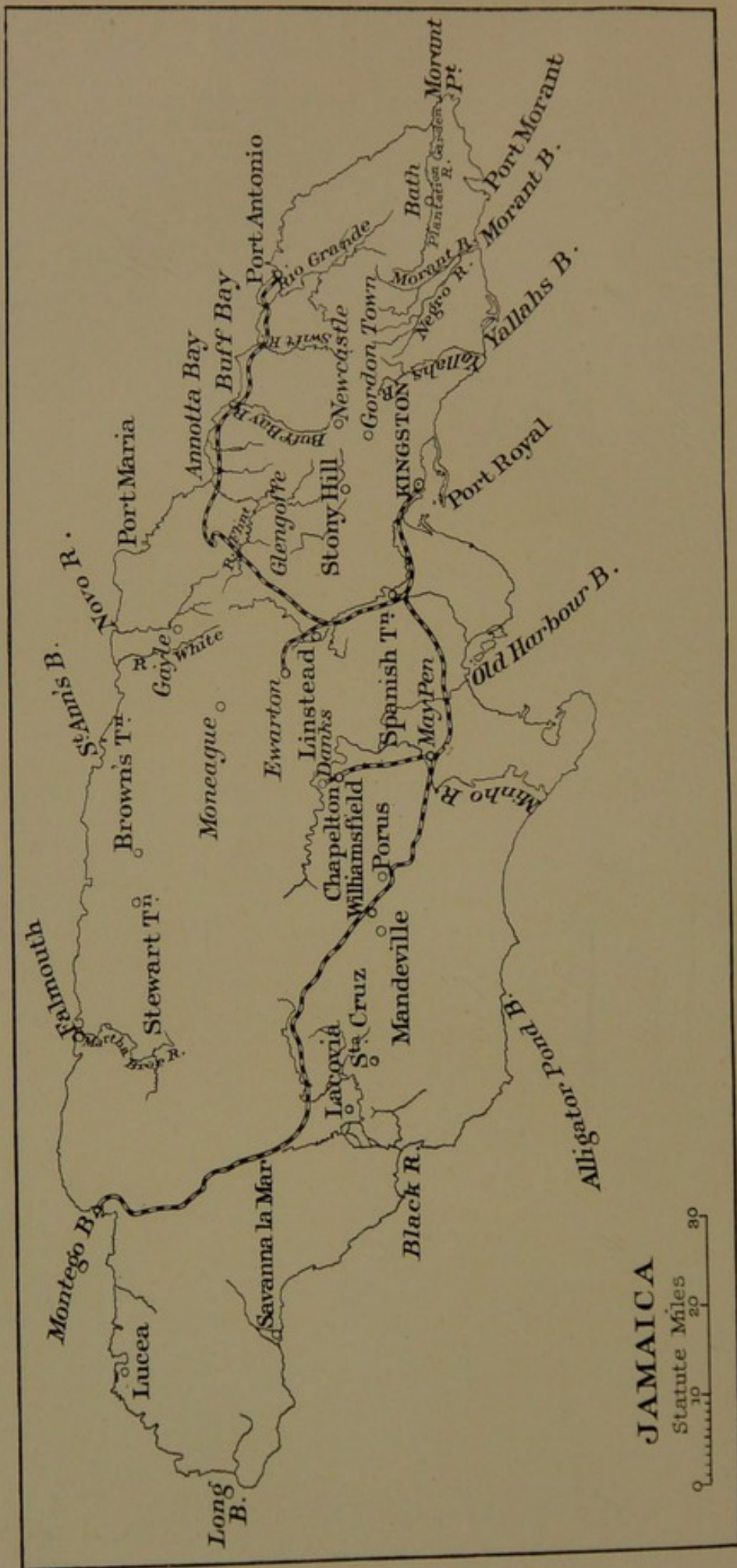
Only two turtle are landed at a time, each being inspected and weighed by the buyer before the ropes are loosened and the animal falls into the water.

It need hardly be said that I was in no mood for taking photographs after nearly a week of discomfort, but so good an opportunity might never return. When the work was done my effects were taken to the Queen's Hotel, where I had stopped on my previous arrival in Jamaica about a year before.

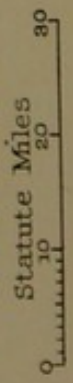








**JAMAICA**





## CHAPTER IV.

## IN JAMAICA.

**A**FTER living to a great extent on preserved food for nearly a year it was a positive luxury to take my meals again at the comfortable and inexpensive Gaiety Restaurant, for although the Queen's Hotel was probably the cheapest place in Kingston for a lodging, the food was by no means as good as could be obtained elsewhere at the same price. From my former stay here, before going to the Cayman Islands, I was, of course, aware that the Queen's Hotel was not a very desirable residence owing to the number of black and coloured people who patronized the house, but my case was a peculiar one which required strict economy. There was no certainty that the business on account of which I was going to Europe would prove successful, so I naturally wished to make my hard-earned money last as long as possible in order to get a fair idea of the West Indies before leaving it, perhaps for ever.

The hotel occupied a considerable extent of ground, having a large yard at the side, from which the accompanying photograph was taken. The building in the foreground, comparatively small in size, was the nucleus where the office, dining-room and bar were situated on the solidly-built ground floor, while the upper story only contained a few large wooden rooms. The larger building to the right, composed entirely of wood, contained three stories, built on the principle of fitting as many rooms as possible into a certain space, and could accommodate more than a hundred people. Each story had a balcony in front and a passage through the centre, into which the little dormitories on each side opened. Most of the lodgers were not residents in Kingston, being visitors from the country or travellers, either returning from a voyage or just going to make one; in fact, so many had been to Panama or to some other Spanish-speaking country that it was not unusual to hear them showing off their linguistic acquirements. It was indeed like a little township, for besides the numerous lodgers and their visitors, vendors of fruit and of light refreshments were constantly passing through the central passages, offering their wares at the doors of the rooms.

As a rule this shifting herd of people, most of whom were black or coloured, assumed a holiday aspect in their best clothes, taking their enjoyment in a good-humoured way, so that rows such as the following were of rare occurrence.

An American had evidently been having some refreshment with several coloured people on the front balcony, to judge from the glasses



on the table in front of them, when a respectable-looking coloured woman who was lodging in one of the adjacent rooms appeared on the scene, and remarking that the company had been having "a good time" suggested that she might join the convivial party. The American, who was evidently not disposed to accede to her request, remarked curtly that she must not think that all were like herself, as others could have "a good time" without drinking. This excuse, however, was not considered valid by the lady, who drew attention to the glasses which were evidently in ready use, and clinched her argument by saying, "How can you have a good time of it unless you eat and drink?" adroitly coupling solid with liquid refreshment. Her argument, however, was cut short by some expression which she considered insulting, whereupon she exclaimed, "I'm a respectable coloured woman, a native of Jamaica, and my husband is a white man." "I don't care if he's a green man," remarked the American. The woman became very angry, and taking an unfair advantage of her opponent, she replied in Spanish, which he could not understand. Believing, however, that her words were not complimentary, he sent for one of the hotel assistants to translate what she said.

It would be out of place to describe the town, which has since been destroyed by earthquake and fire. Kingston, however, never was an imposing looking town. With the exception of a few of the principal streets, most of the buildings were built of wood, in that style so much more frequent in the British than in the foreign West Indies.

A few central features, however, are likely to remain always, such as the park, whose beautiful tropical foliage is sure to attract a stranger. When the band plays in this well-kept public garden on Sundays and other holidays most people would be convinced that the female population of all colours presents a very creditable appearance.

Another permanent landmark is the principal market place, a large building only separated from the park by the road to Constant Spring. Here and in the open space between the road and the park a daily sale takes place, well attended by buyers and sellers. Almost all the country produce, such as fruit and vegetables, is sold by women, some of whom have come from so far that it is hard to understand how they can make a profit out of the loads they carry on their heads—when, for example, seven good bananas can be bought for one penny, and the price would be far less in proportion for a larger quantity. Certainly the expenses of these people in town are practically nothing, for they leave home in the afternoon and arrive in Kingston some time during the night, without seeking any shelter except what can be obtained without payment. This is especially noticeable on Friday night, when dozens may be seen sleeping under the porticoes of the stores, waiting for the ensuing day, which is the principal market of the week, and on Saturday afternoon they begin the return journey, walking perhaps until late at night before reaching their destination.

The greatest drawbacks to living in Kingston are the heat and the dust. The former is common to most places in the West Indies which lie on the sea-level, while the latter is rather excessive in this town on account of the slightness of the rainfall, for the range of mountains in the interior does not here extend to within several miles of the coast, so that when it is raining steadily at Constant Spring, or



at Papaine, where the electric trams stop at the foot of the first hills, it may be quite dry in Kingston only six miles away.

Constant Spring is the name of a large hotel and favourite holiday resort, where it is perceptibly cooler than in town, partly perhaps from its slight elevation of six hundred feet, and partly from other advantages, of which one of the greatest is the comparative absence of dust. The road between here and town is lined in many places with pretty suburban villas, generally made of wood, and standing in their own grounds planted with ornamental trees, where many business people have taken advantage of the good electric car service which enables them to reside in the country and to spend the working hours in town.

After having enjoyed the luxuries of Kingston for nearly three weeks I felt that it was time to make a more general acquaintance with Jamaica. Accordingly I planned a walking expedition which was to take me to Buff Bay on the northern side of the island, and from there to Port Antonio, after which my return would be guided by circumstances. The fewer encumbrances the better for a trip of this kind, so I merely stuffed a few necessities into the canvas bag which contained the camera, and with it over my shoulder and the tripod in my hand, started on this eventful journey.

It was on Saturday, January 12, 1907, and so near dark that under ordinary circumstances the departure would have been deferred until the next morning, but something impelled me to start at once and to lose no more time. I got a lift for about six miles in the tram as far as Papaine, at the foot of the hills, and by the time we arrived there it was already dark. My destination that night was to be Gordon Town, about three miles further on, for there is no hardship in walking in the dark on a good Jamaican road. A charming freshness in the night air compensated for any difficulties in the steepness of the ascent, the chief drawback being that the darkness prevented me from enjoying the scenery.

Gordon Town, which is in reality only a little village, presented an animated appearance on Saturday night. Many of the market people had already arrived from town, and some had probably to travel much further. The lights of the roadside shanties were lit, displaying a varied assortment of light refreshments, such as buns, fruits and light drinks; but like many other villages in Jamaica, it seemed impossible to obtain a shelter for the night. After many fruitless inquiries for the most simple kind of accommodation, I heard that there was a suitable place at a short distance from the village, on the other side of the mountain stream. Gladly accepting the services of a guide, I crossed the bridge and, after ascending a steep winding path, found myself at a very good accommodation house, standing in its own grounds.

It was of course impossible to realize the surroundings until next morning, but it still remains impressed on my memory as a remarkable locality and an unusually pleasant site for a house in this hot climate. The situation can only be described as a pocket or cleft in the mountains, offering sufficient space for the wants of a good country house, without having enough to encourage unwelcome neighbours. A frowning cliff stood at the end of the pocket, casting its shadow over



part of the glen in a manner most desirable in the tropics, while the foliage and the wild nature of the ground quite concealed the village which lay several hundred yards down the steep incline. Here, at some nine miles from Kingston, six of which were connected by an excellent tram service, was an almost ideal spot among the mountains where a comparatively fresh climate could be enjoyed. The house used once to belong to a coffee plantation, but had now been transformed into a country hotel. In one of the outhouses was a rather unusual luxury, a bath room containing a large tank from three to four feet in depth, through which ran a mountain rivulet, the freshness of which rivalled that of a trout stream in colder climates.

I was so charmed by the situation that it was late on the following morning before I continued my journey over the dividing range of the Island, on the summit of which is the settlement of Newcastle. At the elevation of Gordon Town, probably about one thousand feet, the freshness of the atmosphere is not too much for tropical vegetation, but in the steep ascent between here and Newcastle the coco-nut palm gradually disappears and a scrubby foliage takes its place. Instead of travelling on the more circuitous carriage road, I preferred to use the shorter walking track, which reduces the distance to four miles of almost uninhabited mountain side, as the stony nature of the ground does not encourage cultivation on a large scale, and the negroes are not partial to cool uplands, which are not suitable for many of the fruits and vegetables on which they live.

Newcastle, where the white troops used to be quartered, nearly four thousand feet above the sea-level, has, of course, a temperate climate, but with this exception there is not much to say in its favour. In this somewhat bleak and misty region where tropical vegetation no longer exists, it is hard to believe that one is in an Island so famous for its tropical beauty. The barren-looking range here produces little but a scrubby foliage, and although there is a fine bird's-eye view of the southern coast, the distance precludes a good picture.

The appearance of the late military settlement produces that feeling of desolation inseparably associated with places which have been abandoned; the good and solidly-built little houses were all empty. Pursuing my way past these inhospitable buildings, I came at last to signs of human habitation in the centre of the deserted encampment, where the welcome sight of a refreshment house met my view. While waiting for some food, I entered into conversation with a white soldier, who said he was one of the only two quartered here, but that there were about five artillery-men in the outskirts. The man, who was presumed to be retained as a caretaker, seemed quite resentful against the high official responsible for the removal of the troops, evidently finding the life in such a lonely place very dreary. He told me that he had known it to be misty and wet for weeks at a time, and perhaps it was this very dampness of the climate which caused him to be now suffering from rheumatism. If, however, there were but few residents, a good many visitors arrived in buggies and on horseback. These tourists had probably hired their horses and traps in Gordon Town. One of them asked if a view of Blue Mountain Peak or of Port Antonio could be seen from anywhere in the vicinity, and on being told that he would see



nothing in the distance except sky and water, the tourist seemed greatly disappointed, and said in a querulous tone, "If Mr. Bolton would not be anxious about his horse, I would go further." Here, at any rate, the despised pedestrian scored an advantage. The tourist had to return because the horse-master would be uneasy about his animal; but people of the latter class take no interest in the movements of the man on foot.

A little beyond Newcastle the descent towards the northern side of the Island begins; but there was practically no difference in the scrubby appearance of the vegetation on either side of the summit of the range. I was only going to travel another five or six miles on that afternoon, intending to pass the night at Forest Hurst, which was said to be the only place where there was an accommodation house before reaching the coast at Buff Bay, thirteen miles further on, and I did not wish to travel in the dark for fear of losing some good scenery.

It was early on Sunday afternoon when I reached Forest Hurst, somewhat below the scrubby zone of the range. This place had evidently been another coffee plantation, to judge from the large barbecue or cement floor for drying coffee beans beside the house; for in Jamaica, as elsewhere, the best coffee grows in these semi-tropical climates, where the rainfall is excessive at an elevation of from two to four thousand feet.

On Monday morning a heavy mountain drizzle had come on, so that I did not leave until the afternoon, which allowed sufficient time for my thirteen miles' walk to Buff Bay. Up to now the mountain side had been almost uninhabited, but, as the descent became less steep, the country began to assume its normal aspect, dotted with the cottages of the peasants and with coco-nut palms, and in a few miles I had reached that fertile part of the country which is devoted to the growth and exportation of bananas. The importance of this industry was well marked on the present occasion, Monday being the busiest day of the week on the northern coast, owing to the quantity of fruit which is carried to the wharfs of the United Fruit Company. The loads were piled up in mule-carts, generally driven by black or coloured people, who stared at me as I passed, for, as before remarked, it is customary for white people to ride or drive.

I had now walked about ten miles from Forest Hurst and could not have been more than three miles from Buff Bay. The road here followed the right bank of the Buff Bay River, a considerable body of water, which was rushing over its rocky bed. On its further side the open country was under the cultivation of bananas, but immediately on my right were the last spurs of the range which I had just descended, uncultivated hills which hugged the river so closely that a cutting had to be made at their feet, in order to make room for the road to pass between them and the river.

Suddenly I found it almost impossible to stand, having to put out one or other of my feet violently to save myself from falling. My impression was that I was suffering from a cerebral attack, but while wondering what the consequences would be I heard a roar, and looking up instinctively, saw rocks rolling down the steep hillside in



my direction. Some of them pitched on the road within about twenty yards from where I was standing and, shivering to pieces, sent their fragments in many directions. It was an awful moment, not to be compared to anything in real life, although bearing some resemblance to those lurid pictures of the Judgment Day, in which rocks and fragments of trees are represented as falling on people. With the instinct of self-preservation I climbed over a low, but strong wall, built on the side of the road next the river, and, crouching under its shelter, waited until the fusillade of rocks and stones, several of which hit the wall, had ceased. The whole event may have lasted less than half a minute, although it seemed much longer.

When all was quiet I got up and looked over the wall. Rocks were lying on the road in several places, impeding the traffic, and the black driver of a mule cart was on foot holding the heads of the frightened animals. On remarking to the man that we had better get out of this spot as soon as possible, he replied, "Can't, the road is blocked," for, although there were only a few rocks on the road near where we were standing, a little further on there had been a regular landslide, so that the way was piled up with some three to four feet of rocks, earth and shrubs, from the side of the hill. A speedy retreat from this dangerous place was most desirable, so I climbed over the landslide, thinking that this would be a quicker way of escape than by entering the river, which was rocky and uneven in its depth. Every now and then a few pebbles rolled down from above, as if to remind one that everything on the surface had been detached and was in an unstable position. A little further on the two men who had been with the mule-cart passed me, riding on their animals, which they had taken across the river, leaving the cart behind. Fortunately the level coast country was soon reached, for when the road emerged from the hills the danger of being hit by rolling fragments had passed.

At the time I thought that this was only a local occurrence of the nature of a landslide, being quite unaware that this was the memorable earthquake of January 14, 1907, which had destroyed the business area of Kingston, and killed so many of its inhabitants.

On nearing Buff Bay I had further evidence that this was a general catastrophe in the number of frightened people on the roadside, who were talking of the injuries which some had received and of the wreckage of the church. It was now late in the afternoon and, as Buff Bay in its present state did not seem to be a very desirable place to stop at, I went to the railway station, with the intention of going on by train to Port Antonio, some twenty miles further eastward along the northern coast. The station at any rate had not been wrecked, but the employee seemed very doubtful about the chances of being able to reach Port Antonio; eventually, however, he let me have a ticket on the understanding that the train might not reach its destination that night. About two hours after its usual time the train arrived at Buff Bay, continuing its journey very slowly towards Port Antonio. By the light of the lanterns at the side of the railway line we could see the gangs of men who had been clearing away whatever obstacles had fallen on the rails, and on reaching the





A Busy Thoroughfare in Kingston.  
Road between the Market (on the right) and the Park (on the left).



The Queen's Hotel, Kingston.





Coco-nut Palms at Port Antonio.



Effects of the Earthquake.  
Some of the Ruins in Kingston.



end of the journey I felt rather exhausted from the proximity of sudden death, which will take more out of most men than the ordinary travelling experiences of weariness or hunger.

Several reasons had combined to make Port Antonio a landmark in my expedition. It is a town on the northern coast, well-known as a favourite resort of wealthy tourists, who have been probably influenced in their choice by the luxuries of the Titchfield Hotel, which is said to be the best in Jamaica. The luxuries of expensive hotels were far from attractions to a person of my limited means, but the place was said to be pretty, and a postcard which had largely contributed towards my visit seemed to justify the saying.

Buggies were now plying briskly between the railway station and the centre, the money of the rich tourists, chiefly Americans, having infused an unusual stir into this little town. Following instinctively in the direction of the traffic I presented myself at an hotel, but finding that its tariff was three dollars daily I tried somewhere else and eventually found a second-rate place which charged eight shillings for accommodation not so good as might be had in Kingston for half the money. These high prices were the natural result of the rich tourists.

The earthquake had, of course, been felt here, but no one as yet realized the extent of the disaster in Kingston, the afternoon train having left the capital before the shock occurred. Next morning, however, the situation had so wrought upon the religious nature of the black people that there were already a few extemporary prophets in the street, warning their hearers that this was a visitation from above, on account of their transgressions. I was just sitting down to breakfast when a coloured woman connected with the hotel led me to the window for the purpose of showing me the Court-house, which had been partially destroyed, asking me at the same time how anyone could withstand such proofs of Divine power; for in the little towns and villages of Jamaica, the public buildings such as churches and Court-houses were those which had suffered most, being generally built of stone or brick, while the residential houses, which are almost always made of wood, were comparatively little damaged. Thus in the time of an earthquake the strongest becomes the weakest and the weakest the strongest, and wood itself, although much more safe than brick or stone, was not so secure as the palm-leaf cottages of the poorest peasants. With the exception of the Court-house little damage seemed to have been done to Port Antonio, as the large Titchfield Hotel, unlike most fashionable resorts of its kind, was made of wood and, therefore, not destroyed by the shock.

Up to now circumstances had not favoured my taking any photographs on this eventful expedition, so I started for a walk of two or three miles round the bay, where a fine row of coco-nut palms fringed the water's edge, apparently the very ones which had attracted my attention on the postcard. Accompanied by a big black boy I passed through the streets, in which one or two prophets had already collected a crowd around them, and soon reached the country at a place where there was a large fresh-water creek, a little above its entrance into the sea. A number of washerwomen near the water's edge offered the material for a good foreground, but knowing that these



people generally resent being photographed unless they are paid for their often unconscious services, I walked up to the group to make the necessary arrangement.

They were quite willing, if only we could come to terms; so I asked, "How much do you want?"

"How much do you generally give?" was the reply.

"Sixpence each," was my answer.

"What would be the use of sixpence to me?" said the woman who had spoken before.

"The people in Kingston are satisfied with it."

"Oh, the people in Kingston are very poor."

And these were poor black washerwomen, who probably did not average a shilling for a day's work; but the place had been demoralized by tourists.

Seeing that we were not likely to come to terms, I said to the boy, "Come on, we'll go and photograph coco-nut trees. Coco-nut tree not ask for money?" I remarked interrogatively, lapsing into pidgin English. "Coco-nut tree not ask for money," replied the boy decisively, and about half way round the bay we did in fact find some of these trees which fully bore out the good character given them. When, however, we reached the opposite side I found that the fringe of palms which had so taken my fancy lay in private ground, so we returned to Port Antonio.

During the walk we had been forcibly reminded of the event of the previous day by one or two slight tremors, accompanied by a low deep noise like very distant thunder. By the time that we arrived at the hotel the news of the disaster in Kingston was already known and the gravity of the situation had lost nothing in its transmission. Confused accounts of the destruction of the capital by earthquake and fire were retailed, with the definite assertion that the Queen's Hotel had been burnt. My earnings had all been deposited in the Government Savings Bank, so I had not much anxiety on that score, but it would be very awkward to have all my effects destroyed, with the exception of the clothes I was wearing and the camera. The only way to know what had really happened was to see for oneself, so next morning I started in the train for Kingston. There were so many people who, like myself, had interests in the capital, that the train was unusually crowded. On several occasions the power of the engine was insufficient to draw the carriages up some of the steeper grades, owing to which we went backwards down the incline after having nearly reached the summit. Eventually, however, we surmounted these obstacles by rushing them, the journey being made unpleasantly exciting by a rumour that the bridges had been rendered unsafe in several places.

To look at the unruffled appearance of the country no one would have believed that the principal part of the capital of Jamaica now lay in ruins, although we knew afterwards that the shock had been general throughout the Island and that most of the larger brick and stone buildings had been damaged. The frail little cottages of the peasants were unaffected, nor was there any perceptible injury done to the small wooden railway stations. While yet in the train, one of the railway officials gave me the welcome news that the Queen's



Hotel had not been burnt down and was still standing. When we reached Spanish Town the appearance of the landscape became more familiar to me, for it will be remembered that this is the place where the different branches of the railway diverge, and I had been here on my first arrival in Jamaica. Little change, however, was perceptible until we arrived at the terminus of Kingston, where the effects of the earthquake were very apparent. Owing to the shattered condition of the railway station, we were allowed to reach the street through the large aperture in the partially destroyed brick wall, but although signs of the disaster were very visible in the streets between here and the Queen's Hotel, it was only in the more central parts of the town that wholesale destruction had taken place.

My hotel was indeed standing, but by no means entirely uninjured; the lower story of the central building, being made of brick, had several small clefts in its walls, and thus the upper wooden story, which had been only slightly damaged, was made unsafe from the shaky condition of the house beneath it. The large three-storied wooden building however, on the top of which my room was situated, to the extreme right behind the tree, was in just the same state as when I left it nearly four days before. The management of the house was thrown into that confusion which reigned everywhere. No food could be obtained, the ostensible reason being that the dining room was unsafe, but in reality because in this time of terror no one cared to cater for the wants of the public. The hour of the late West Indian breakfast had now long passed, so I went to the market in the hope of being able to buy something to eat. The place was almost deserted, but I managed to buy a plantain which had to suffice for my present wants. If food was so hard to procure it seemed preferable to leave the town for some district which had suffered less severely, until things had righted themselves.

Before making up my mind, however, I was determined to know the worst, and with this intent walked a few hundred yards further towards that central part which was said to have suffered most. Standing at the edge of the park and looking down King Street, the horrors of the scene presented themselves to my view. Instead of occasional damages, as in the more outlying places, the whole street right down to the sea was a mass of smouldering ruins. Large houses of several stories were demolished, some of the walls still standing and others razed to the ground, with the bricks and other materials of which they had been composed strewn over the pavement. The smoking remains of a tram-car lay on the lines in the middle of the street, fire having ably assisted the earthquake in its course of destruction, and everything inflammable had been consumed. A few black soldiers were picketed at all the corners of the streets which opened into this area of desolation to prevent the entrance of people from the fear that the value of the things which were lying open and unprotected among the ruins might offer a temptation to loot.

Enough, however, had been seen to show that a serious calamity had taken place, and it hardly seemed possible that so much destruction could have been brought about without considerable loss of life. Thus the idea gradually forced itself on me that, instead of leaving the town, I ought to present myself at the hospital to offer my services



in case they were short-handed. It is little more than a brisk ten minutes' walk from the park to the hospital. The intermediate space, containing for the most part only wooden buildings, had suffered to a far less extent from the earthquake, and had not been affected by the fire, which may be said to have stopped at the park. One could only conjecture what had become of most of the inhabitants, for the streets were in a semi-deserted condition and the few people seen were silent and preoccupied.

On reaching the front of the hospital, however, a very different scene presented itself. Crowds were standing near the door, which was besieged by about ten rows of people, speaking and gesticulating wildly in their efforts to gain admittance, those who could get no tidings of their relations thinking that this would be the most likely place to find them. On account of this the porter had to exercise great discretion about admitting anyone, otherwise the entrance would have been rushed. After waiting for a considerable time, I managed to get nearer the door, when the porter recognized me and let me pass.

A glance showed that all the available ground space was littered with wounded people, but my first business was to see the S.M.O. for the purpose of asking if any assistance was required. He readily accepted my services, putting me down for duty on that very night, and in the meantime I returned to the desolate hotel to rest before the work came on.



## CHAPTER V.

## IN JAMAICA.

**E**VEN under ordinary circumstances the night rounds of a medical officer have a pathetic aspect. The assemblage of suffering humanity, many of whom attest by their restless movements or by groans that they cannot sleep, the dim light in the ward, the noiseless tread of the doctor and of the nurse in charge, the information given in subdued tones at the bedside, all combine to form a scene where life is made more impressive by the proximity of death. And if this be the case when everything possible has been done to alleviate suffering, how greatly is the situation intensified when a sudden calamity has stricken down a multitude for whom no sufficient provision can be made, and whose forms lie strewn on the ground by night, like shadows in the darkness.

The hospital buildings could only contain about two hundred patients, and although the exact number of wounded then in their precincts was unknown, it was thought to reach some six or seven hundred. Most of these sufferers, therefore, could not be placed in any bed or ward, but were packed in every available space in the adjoining grounds. Few had even a good mattress to lie on, although there was generally some kind of protection between them and the bare ground, and all had some kind of a blanket.

The nurse in charge of the section led the way with a lantern as we passed slowly between the recumbent figures, endeavouring to find out their necessities without being able to remain for long, owing to the number who required attention. It was so often impossible to obtain any information about the case that my first procedure on coming to a motionless body wrapped in a blanket was to feel the pulse in order to make sure that the person was alive. One, indeed, had been dead for several hours, the limbs being already stiff, and in another life was just extinct. In the little we could do for those alive we had to be guided by circumstances. If there was nothing that urged for immediate treatment, they were left to themselves, but so many complained of pain that we could only pick out the seemingly worst cases for opiates in some form or other.

When my half night's duty was done I slept in one of the tents provided for the doctors, a good many of whom had been summoned in this emergency from the country districts, and were living here. A refreshment place had already been put up where bread and coffee could be obtained at any hour of the night. It was most fortunate that nearly all the wards were low-walled buildings of only one story,



for, being solidly built, they would not otherwise have resisted the shock so well. As it was, the walls showed cracks in some places, although not to the extent of making them dangerous. Thus these buildings remained serviceable, so far as their capacity went, with the exception of one which contained two stories, where the damage had been greater.

Under a system of good management the comparative chaos of the first few days gradually righted itself. Most of the patients had perforce to remain out of doors by day and night, there being no room for them inside; but they were no longer unknown cases, and beds and mattresses gradually made their appearance. As long as the weather keeps dry there is not much hardship in sleeping out of doors in a climate like that of Kingston, where there is practically no cold and very little dampness in the night air.

It would be unsafe, without statistics, to hazard many comparisons of the relative frequencies of the injuries. Flesh wounds and burns were among the most frequent. There was a much larger number of fractures of the legs than of those of the arms. Among the most serious cases were injuries to the spine with their attendant complications. The dressing of the wounds and general attendance to the wants of the patients began at seven in the morning and went on until the time of the late West Indian breakfast. We worked in pairs at our manifold duties, sometimes having to go to the carpenter's department to cut a splint the right length for a broken limb. The work of the morning was of daily occurrence for all, but the afternoon and the night duty were taken in turns.

From the very commencement there was a good supply of food at the hospital for both patients and medical staff. As, however, everything had not yet got into thorough working order, there were often considerable shortcomings in the laying of the table, but these omissions decreased from day to day and we all pulled harmoniously together. Indeed, looking back on this time of general misery and confusion, it may fairly be said that the medical and nursing staff, together with the dispensers and others attached to the hospital, did their duty and earned the respect of the large number of people who came into contact with them.

The exact number of killed and wounded was unknown. We heard that more than seven hundred people had been officially buried, and it was thought that the number of deaths from earthquake and fire might have amounted to one thousand. Probably an equal quantity were wounded, almost all of whom came to the hospital, either at once or afterwards, when their neglected injuries had become serious. Some of the histories connected with the killed and wounded could hardly be surpassed for horror, and the two following will suffice as samples of the rest.

One unfortunate was imprisoned in a partially-fallen building from which he could not be rescued in time to be saved from being burnt to death. It is said that he was even able to stretch out his hand through a hole in a last farewell before the fire overtook him. Another episode, less harrowing, but sufficiently terrible, was told me by the sufferer himself, who was fortunate enough to escape with his life. The following are his own words as far as they can be



remembered: "I was with another man in the first story of a store in Harbour Street when the shock took place. When we came to ourselves the shattered roof had opened in the centre and the rafters were swinging over our heads, threatening to fall upon us. The staircase between us and the ground floor was broken, so we could not descend by it. I saw a rope hanging outside the window and said, 'I'll go down first,' but directly I put my weight on the rope, which had never been made fast, it gave way and I fell on my back in the courtyard. For about three weeks I was unable to walk and thought that my spine had been permanently injured, but now I am beginning to go about again."

Although I had the right to a sleeping-place in one of the tents which were pitched in the hospital compound for the use of the medical staff, I preferred the privacy of my little room at the hotel to remaining where so many people were congregated. On one occasion, only a few days after my return from Port Antonio, I had gone to bed about midnight. A little after three in morning I was awakened by a terrific shock. The roar of the earthquake had passed before I became fully conscious, when, from my elevated position in the highest story of the building, I felt the wooden house rock under me. It swayed backwards and forwards several times, threatening each moment to split into fragments and to bury me in its ruins. Rushing to the door I tried in vain to open it; probably in my confusion I had tried to turn the key the wrong way. By this time all danger had passed, so lighting a candle I dressed hastily and now opened the door without difficulty to seek a comparative safety in the open space of the large yard at the side of the hotel, as the idea of being killed in my sleep was intolerable.

Within the following week I was twice aroused by shocks of less violence in the small hours of the morning. After being thus awakened it was difficult to sleep on the same night in such a dangerous place as a large house, and yet rest was necessary for the next day's work. While wondering how I should overcome this difficulty, I noticed an old iron bedstead under the veranda of the ground floor, and obtained leave from the manager of the hotel to drag it into the before-mentioned yard, where I placed it near the outer wall, so that if the buildings fell the wreckage would not be very likely to reach me. This arrangement was so successful that for about three weeks I slept out of doors in this place, except when on night duty at the hospital. The old bedstead was always left in the yard, and when it was time to go to sleep I went up to my room to get what was necessary for the night, the principal things being a pillow and two blankets, one of which served for a mattress over the wire of the bed, and the other as a covering for myself. When daylight came I rolled up my bed furniture and carried it to my room again, after which I dressed hastily so as to reach the hospital by seven.

Among the few companions who were camping out in the yard like myself was an ex-inspector of police, whose room on the upper story of the central building had been rendered unsafe, and we thus became very friendly with each other. One night, however, I had an unusual visitor. Something induced me to remove the blanket from



over my head towards dawn, when I was somewhat startled in my sleepy condition by seeing the head of a large mule bending over me. All this time there were only two wet nights when it was impossible to sleep in the open. On one of these occasions I tried to sleep in a buggy and on the other in a shed with people, mules and fowls, but both attempts were failures as far as rest was concerned.

It was fortunate, indeed, for the patients who had been lying out by day and night that the rain did not come before now, else the death roll would have been much greater. By this time, however, the warship "Indefatigable" had arrived with a supply of tents. These were speedily put up in the hospital grounds and turned into canvas wards, with camp bedsteads on each side and a passage through the middle, so that all the sufferers were soon under shelter.

And where did the poorer people live, whose homes had been more or less destroyed by recent events? About three thousand were estimated to be camped on the racecourse, a short distance outside the town, on the road to Constant Spring. Some two thousand were also living in the park, only two or three minutes' walk from the Queen's Hotel. These latter were very much crowded for space, the park being comparatively small. In a short time all the grass was worn away, and by degrees the place assumed the appearance of a permanent encampment, owing to the number of little shelters of the most flimsy description, consisting of damaged sheets of iron, pieces of boards and sticks. There was a good supply of water in the park for the purpose of watering the plants, but many of the people must have suffered from hunger. Indeed so apprehensive was the Government that the provision shops would be rushed that some of these places had two black soldiers stationed in front.

The religious nature of the negroes was made very manifest during the night shocks which have been described. After the roar and the accompanying tremor had subsided, the two thousand beings in the park preserved an absolute silence until the fear of instant destruction had passed, but in a few minutes' time some voices began to sing a hymn which was taken up by a great part of the people, and these fervent supplications were continued at intervals for one or two hours, sometimes even going on as I was falling to sleep again.

In about two weeks' time from the commencement of these shocks, the hospital had so far surmounted its gigantic task that most of the country doctors were enabled to return to their respective districts. At this juncture I received a letter from the S.M.O. informing me that he had been asked to thank me for my services and that any expense which I might have incurred in their performance would be refunded. This seemed to be a polite way of saying that I was no longer required, especially as most of the auxiliary staff had already gone, so I looked out for our chief at the hospital and told him that there was nothing to refund, as I had returned to Kingston merely on my own account, remarking at the same time that I supposed that my attendance was no longer required. He considerably replied, however, that it was not fair to expect a man to work without payment any longer, with the result that I remained another month at a salary of half a guinea daily besides my food.

Occasional shocks were still felt, but of decreasing force and



frequency. The last noticed by me, about one month after their commencement, occurred while I was attending to the out-patients in the hospital grounds, just at the side of the two-storied ward which has been described as more injured than the rest. The patients had been removed from the upper story of this building, but as the dangerous period seemed to have passed they had been lately replaced in it. The rumbling of the tremor had scarcely subsided when they rushed out of the ward to the steps of the stairs leading downwards, and if all signs of danger had not speedily come to an end there would probably have been some accidents in the hurried descent of the sick and the wounded. We who were outside watched to see if the already strained building was going to fall, in which case I meant to run, but it stood firm. Shortly afterwards all the patients had to be taken out a second time and were put somewhere else. These frights must have had a very bad effect on some of the injured people, especially on those who had broken legs, one of whom crawled after the other patients who had rushed outside, dragging the broken limb after him. Thus some of the doctors were rather apprehensive that their credit might suffer from badly set fractures, especially as an eminent surgical authority was visiting the Island at this time.

The noise or roar of an earthquake has been compared to many sounds, the best in my opinion being to that of a train coming out of a tunnel, which may be taken to mean the sudden sound of a train quite near. Few people agree in their estimate of the number of shocks. My own calculation comes to something less than a dozen, but others can account for about double that amount. By the time it was all over people were rather overwrought, and many had what is popularly called "nerves." Hospital work had a most soothing effect, and while engaged among the patients the thought of danger almost disappeared.

The following will give an example of the state of mind of some people. It must have been at least a week or two after the last earthquake when I was again using my room at the hotel for sleeping purposes. Just before going to bed a fire had been notified in some part of the town, and a fire engine was being driven rapidly through the street, with the bell ringing violently. I had hardly gone out on the veranda to see what was the matter when a white man rushed out of a neighbouring room and, catching hold of me, exclaimed, "Is this an earthquake?" "No," I replied, "when an earthquake comes on you will know it without hearing a bell rung."

It must not be thought that all the patients in the hospital were negroes or coloured people of the lower classes. These, indeed, formed the great majority, but among some of our wounded were white people of good position, who felt that they could be better cared for here than in their own damaged houses; for many of the pretty suburban villas were partially destroyed, and it was a common sight to see an unsafe wall propped up with a long beam of wood. The destruction generally varied in exact proportion to the amount of masonry in the building. A house built altogether of wood was generally unaffected by the earthquake, but if even the foundation was made of brick the chances in favour of its safety were much less.



The management of the Queen's Hotel had always been somewhat inefficient in providing food for its inmates, and since the earthquake it had been impossible to obtain any food there, although eating-houses had long since been started in different places. One night I felt an inclination for some supper, which was not likely to be gratified, West Indian hours being so early that after nine it becomes more than doubtful whether anything can be obtained, except strong drinks, of which there are always plenty. Remembering, however, the proximity of the park, I thought there might be a chance of buying some food where so many people were congregated.

The park, closed under ordinary circumstances at ten at night, was now, of course, open at all hours, being the home of two thousand people. This was the first time I had ever entered it by night under the present conditions, and it presented a curious and somewhat weird aspect. Little shelters had been erected all over the now bare ground, which, although teeming with humanity, was in utter darkness save for whatever light the skies afforded and some faint glimmerings from the shelters themselves. The railings at the sides of the main paths had been removed in places so as to allow a free passage. Entering by one of these apertures I looked around to see if any enterprising refugee had taken advantage of such an opportunity for selling refreshment. My attention was attracted to a hut of more pretensions than its neighbours, lit up by a lantern in front of it. Here I was agreeably surprised to find that a good assortment of food and drink could be obtained, such as tea, coffee, bread, eggs, and cake.

The keeper of this stall was a civil and intelligent black man, who, together with his sister, appeared to have been doing a thriving business for some time. He informed me that until lately he used to keep open until after two in the morning, but that now, as things were settling down, he closed much earlier. I sat down on the bench in front of the stall and enjoyed my supper so much that I returned several times afterwards. On one of these occasions a black man came up and asked for refreshment also. The stall-keeper looked at the newcomer and, not liking his appearance, remarked, "I don't attend to the like of you, I only serve white people; you're a rough nigger." "And you're a nigger too," replied the man angrily. A smile of supreme self-content passed over the stall-keeper's face as he answered, "*Yes, but I'm a different kind of a nigger.*" This retort appeared to be unanswerable, and the would-be customer slouched away moodily in the darkness.

On another occasion there was a violent contention close to the stall, relative to the sum of a halfpenny. A woman who sold some kind of food accused a man of eating value to this amount and of absconding without paying for it. The faint light was just sufficient to show the gesticulations of the contending parties, who were equally excited. At last the woman cried out, "Constable, constable!" upon which a black policeman soon appeared, to whom the woman related her version of the story, which the man as vehemently denied. The attitude of this member of the force might have stood as an example for a policeman in any part of the world. He listened with impassive face to the accusation and to its refutation, after which he addressed



the man thus, "Now if you've eaten a halfpenny worth of food belonging to this lady why can't you pay for it and have done with it?" The man, however, persisted in his denials, and, as there were no witnesses, he was allowed to leave, rolling his eyes in protests of innocence to the last.

In this encampment the people were far from being as miserable as might be supposed, being for the most part of the lowest class, whose wants are very small. No doubt there was considerable hardship at first, but after a few weeks it is even probable that many had become fond of this Bohemian life, which offered the great advantage of their not having to pay rent. Some remained here so long that they were eventually given a limited time to clear out, else they would have continued in these quarters to the detriment of the park and of the general public. All these people, whether in the park or on the racecourse, were attended by a doctor from the hospital and a considerable number of tents were served out to them by the Government.

Now that the business part of the town was destroyed, the vicinity of the park had become the principal commercial area, owing to its central position and the comparatively small amount of damage it had received. Many of its wooden houses were still in working order, and even the brick market building was standing, the lowness of the walls having probably helped to save it. Some of the larger storekeepers, whose premises had been demolished, did not disdain to put up temporary warehouses in this locality, where many of the smaller shops were already doing a thriving sale.

One Saturday night, after returning from the hospital, I stopped in this area to watch the brisk trade of a little shop which evidently kept provisions for the poorer black people. The sellers were two Chinamen, while their customers were chiefly black women, who besieged the window in front of the small building; for the Chinamen, evidently considering that it was unsafe to allow the buyers to enter, had devised a curious means of selling from an aperture, made something after the manner of a ticket-office, with a small hole surrounded by wire netting. Through this hole the women passed their coins, specifying at the same time what kind of provisions they wanted, while the Chinamen handed the required articles through an open space so high above the netting that it was practically impossible for any light-fingered customers to take advantage of it.

The women were anxious to buy their Sunday food before closing time, and made known their wants in the following terms: "One penny bread." "Take de money and gimme de fish." "Mushu, my love, three gill red rice."

Black people are very punctilious about giving people their due title, and, knowing that Chinamen were of a foreign race, they thought that the French mode of address was the most appropriate. When at last the Chinamen determined to close, one of them went outside with a shutter, and remarking in a laconic manner, "Now then, quick time, too late," he closed the window, so that several of the poor women went away unserved.

The hospital was now beginning to resume its normal aspect. There would, of course, be for some time an excess of patients who



would have to be kept in the canvas tents, but with this exception the old routine had returned. In the period immediately after the earthquake no people presented themselves on account of trivial ailments, and if any had done so it is probable that they would not have received treatment. Now, however, the room where casualties are admitted, often known as the "receiving room," became again crowded with those cases which seemed to have been quiescent in the time of danger, when people at any rate refrain from wounding each other. My work had, in fact, come to an end with almost a feeling of sadness at being separated from those with whom I had been working for a considerable period.

One of the first uses I made of my freedom was to take a photograph of the ruins before it was too late. Indeed the best time for doing so had already passed, for whatever wreckage had been lying on the road was now cleared away. During the first few days after the earthquake the professional photographers, who, like others, had suffered severely from the loss of much of their working plant, tried to recoup themselves by taking a large number of views of the disaster, which were very popular with some people, as somewhat grim souvenirs. So many pictures of desolation seemed hardly necessary, each being but a repetition of the same kind. In one a front wall might be thrown down, and in another those at the sides, but only what had happened in the immediate neighbourhood was reproduced, from want of an elevated position for taking the view. A daring photographer, however, managed to record a panoramic scene by going on the top of the ruins of the parish church which was situated in the upper end of King Street, at the extremity of the ruined business area.

I was anxious that my solitary view should contain this church, which had been a well-known feature in old Kingston, so I chose as my site one of the narrow lanes running parallel to King Street, obtaining by this means a fair sample of wreckage in the foreground, together with the ruined church tower in the distance, bending at a very perceptible angle. The photograph was only just taken in time. The clock of the church, which had indicated the fatal hour of thirty-three minutes past three ever since the earthquake, had been removed only a few days previously, and shortly afterwards the leaning tower was pulled down, as its proximity to a principal street was not considered safe. Signs of reconstruction are already visible in the new building which a workman is ascending by a ladder.

Two important side issues connected with the earthquake have been left unmentioned until now, so as not to break the sequence of the narrative. One of these is the much controverted passage between the Governor of Jamaica and the American admiral.

The white troops had been almost entirely removed from the Island owing to the somewhat parsimonious action of the Home Government, so the necessary patrol in the time of terror was supplied by the West Indian regiment, which proved quite competent to perform its responsible task.

The Americans, actuated by really humane motives, appeared early on the scene to offer their services, with the result that a body of marines were sent on shore to preserve order at the request of a high



official, but not of the Governor, who had been what is commonly termed "given away" by his subordinate in office. The Governor, on becoming aware of the occurrence, somewhat abruptly requested these foreign troops to retire, their presence being neither necessary nor consistent with the dignity of the Government. The Americans backed up the cause of their admiral, who considered himself slighted; but the British Government did not support the action of their Governor and apologized for his conduct.

It was most unfortunate for the Governor that the foreign marines should have been invited to land without his knowledge, or that, in the confusion of the moment, any forms of courtesy should have been omitted in requesting them to retire, but in all the main points at issue the Governor was in the right, and the blame, if any, lay with others; for if white soldiers were required in an emergency, it was the fault of the Home Government for withdrawing those previously stationed in Jamaica, which, although by far the largest British possession in the West Indian Islands, was now without adequate protection, while if the black regiment was sufficient to maintain order, as was actually the case, foreign marines were not required.

"After all," many people will say, "this was an affair between the English and American Governments, and if they settled the matter to their own satisfaction, no one else need complain." This is the way in which an episode in a far-off country is treated when two great nations come into collision, quite forgetting the prior claims of the third party, the country in which the event happened.

The following words of wisdom, spoken by a black man in discussing the matter with others of his colour, will put a different light on the matter. "You know," he said, "the way in which the Americans treat our people. Why, some of those soldiers would have asked for no better sport than shooting some of us." And who would have suffered from the consequences of such an act? Not the Americans, who would have evacuated the Island after such a summary pacification, but the white Jamaicans, for the "colour question," which is on the whole kept well within bounds in the British West Indies, would have been thus let loose and the aggrieved negroes might have sought to retaliate on the unprotected white minority.

The other issue, which affected chiefly the Kingston merchants, was whether the fire insurance companies were liable or not. This was a very complex affair, the fire being caused by the earthquake, a phenomenon of Nature not always included in insurance claims. The fire is said to have broken out in several places almost immediately after the shock, and several theories have been put forward to account for its origin. A very obvious one would be to suppose that, if a building were wrecked, any fire lit in it would be scattered and thus cause a general conflagration. Some of the insurance companies compromised the matter, others refused to pay, the result being a protracted litigation, in which decisions were appealed against and reversed.

The earthquake had only destroyed the large and more substantially built structures, leaving the wooden cottages practically unaffected. Neither was any damage done to live stock or cultivated ground, except perhaps in the case of an occasional landslide near the



mountains. Thus many of the country people made money out of the disaster by selling their produce to better advantage during the period of scarcity of the more elaborated foodstuffs. In like manner many of the artisan and labouring classes were ultimately able to obtain good employment in repairing the devastated area.

Business people, however, who had lost their stores, together with the merchandize in them, sustained such a downright blow that their energy remained paralysed for a considerable time. Those whose means or credit enabled them to renew operations without much delay were, perhaps, able to recoup themselves, owing to the increased amount of custom and higher prices obtained by the few who were so fortunate.



## CHAPTER VI.

## IN JAMAICA.

THE old business area of Kingston had now settled down into that state of chronic desolation which it assumed for considerably more than a year, until a plan had been adopted for utilizing the grant and the loan of money furnished by the Home Government for building purposes. During this period the fragments of the demolished houses were merely piled up at the sides of the streets, the walls of the ruins being allowed to stand unless they interfered with the public safety. These thoroughfares were still necessary for various purposes, such as to connect the suburbs on the opposite sides of the town, especially by the tramway through King Street and Harbour Street, and to afford access to the patched-up post office, as well as to the steamers moored at the edge of the ruins. On a windy day the dust was here at its worst, with the knowledge that this was not from the comparatively clean surface of a traffic-worn road, but from the remains of lately-inhabited houses where for several weeks an occasional foetid smell which attracted the vultures (the so-called John Crows) made one look suspiciously at some formless heaps of ruins. These birds are identical with the Cuban vulture, being in fact the turkey-buzzard of the United States.

From my short experience in Jamaica I already knew that there would be some difficulty in seeing its prettier parts. The Island has become a tourist resort to such an extent that a stranger of limited means, when travelling in the country, is continually reminded that he is not the kind of person wanted. As a rule, the minimum charge at the hotels is ten shillings by the day, the places of interest are often so distant that a drive to them is expensive, while any attempt at a walking trip causes the white pedestrian to be looked upon with a certain amount of contempt by the black rural population. In fact Kingston is almost the only place in Jamaica where a stranger can live at a fairly cheap rate, say four shillings by the day, owing to the number of officials and employees with small salaries, who have to be provided with the necessities of life at reasonable rates.

My first expedition was to the far-famed Bog Walk, from which one can return to Kingston by rail on the same day. This somewhat strange name, said to be a corruption of the Spanish *boca del agua* (mouth of the water) is given to that stretch of the River Cobre which lies between Bog Walk railway station and Spanish Town. The easiest way to see it economically is to take the train to the former



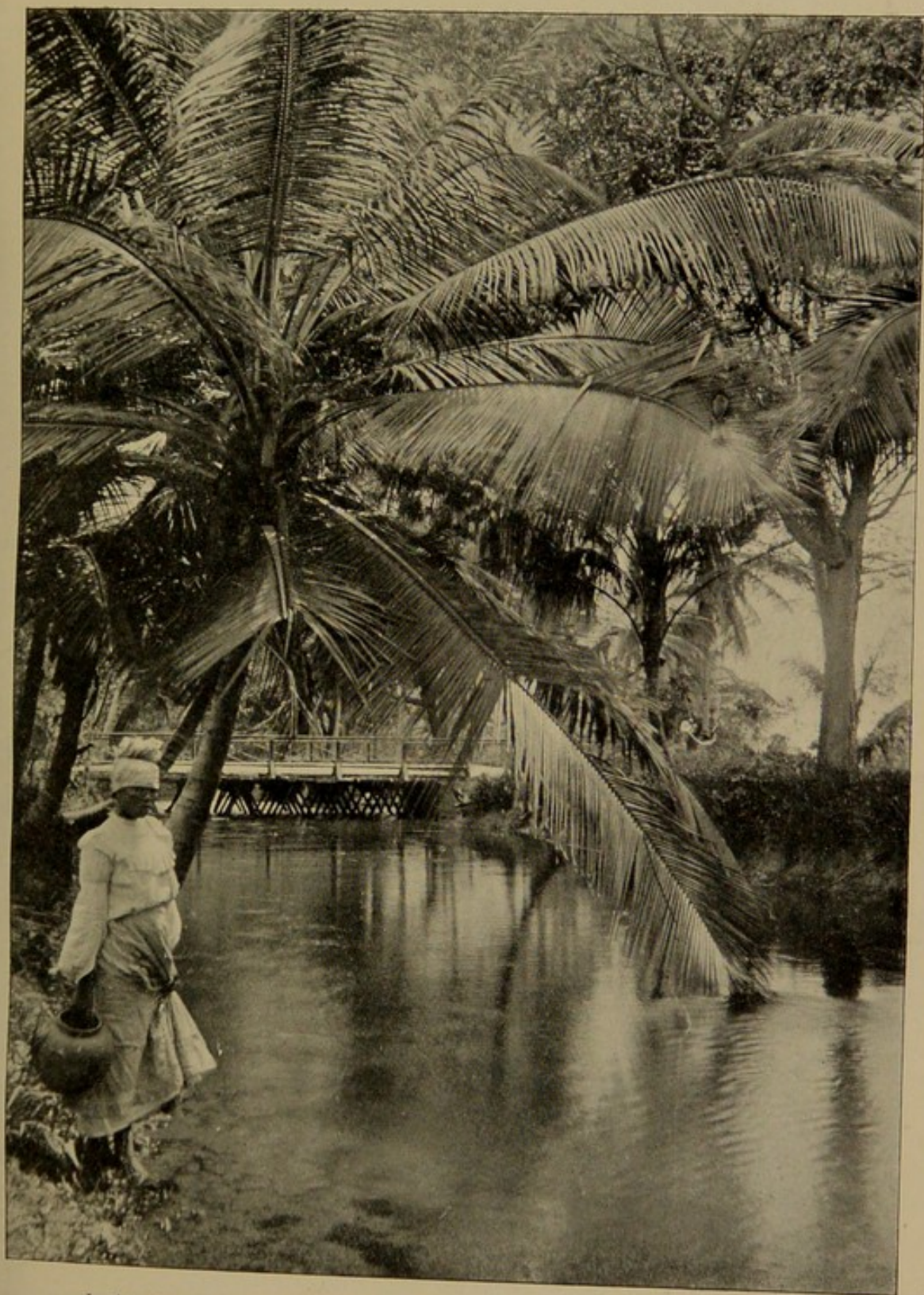
place, about twenty-one miles from Kingston and to return by following the river for nine miles of its downward course towards Spanish Town, where the train can again be taken for the last twelve miles to the capital.

On getting out of the train at Bog Walk station, I found one of my former patients, a boy, who willingly accompanied me as a guide. We now followed the good level road which runs along the left bank of the Cobre River, whose beauties in this locality have been so ardently described in guide books that no attempt will be made to enlarge upon them. Such high-flown language will, in fact, tend to make a stranger disappointed with its undoubted merits, which are those of a typical Jamaican river, rushing over its rocky bed in the midst of wild scenery. Many places equally beautiful have remained unsung, and the Bog Walk probably owes its renown in great measure to its nearness to the capital, and the advantage which the good level road offers for driving. This, in fact, is the kind of expedition which would suit the tourist, so dear to Jamaicans—the person who hires a buggy and pair and brings abundant provisions for a picnic on the river's bank.

After walking more than half the distance we crossed the river by means of a large bridge close to where a dam has been made for the purpose of supplying an irrigation canal with water. I was unaware at the time that this canal was one of the sights of the place, but it offered so many photographic possibilities that, on being told that we could reach Spanish Town by this way, I left the river and followed the bank of the canal, which is so overgrown with foliage that it resembles a natural stream. It widens out into lakes in places, where the combination of water with abundant vegetation in the solitude of a forest gives the appearance of a wild scene on the banks of some sluggish tropical river rather than that of an artificial canal within sixteen miles of Kingston. Still I could see nothing suitable for my purpose until we were only two miles from Spanish Town. Here, close to No. 8 bridge, was a charming spot which well repaid me for my trouble. Further on towards Spanish Town the canal loses most of its beauty, being broken up into several channels which look like mere trenches. Spanish Town itself deserves a passing notice as being the old capital of Jamaica, and is even now next in size to Kingston. It has still some official pretensions in the way of public buildings, and what is more important for a traveller, an hotel with moderate charges. On my way out in the train I had passed an estate called Belmore Pen, close to Gregory Park, the first railway station from Kingston. The house on this property appeared to be such a good specimen of a Jamaican country residence that I returned on a subsequent day to photograph it. The name "pen" implies a grazing farm, but from the number of banana trees it may be inferred that this fruit is now the principal product.

Wishing now to see some more distant part of the country, I decided to go to Mandeville, for the following reasons. The only two outlying places where I had been in Jamaica were Gayle and Port Antonio, both of which lie towards the north-eastern part of the Island. Mandeville, however, lies in a fairly central position, about





Irrigation Canal, two miles from Spanish Town and fourteen miles from Kingston.





House on Belmore Estate, with Banana Plantation behind.



Road between Williamsfield and Mandeville.



fifty miles to the west of Kingston and had been spoken of as a desirable district. In the same direction also, but nearer Kingston, was a sugarcane estate which I wished to visit on the return journey, having a letter of introduction to the manager.

Railway stations in Jamaica have a quiet and peaceful look about them. The nearest approach which I ever saw to a dispute in their vicinity was when one black man said to another, "You might get into serious trouble." They only carry a first and a third class, but it is quite customary for white people to travel in the latter, where even the poorest negroes make an effort to dress tidily.

In this comparatively large Island, nearly one hundred and fifty miles in length, it must not be imagined that the beauty of the scenery is continuous throughout. Some of the picked spots, indeed, may be second to none in the West Indies, but there is also a fair amount of plain, not to say ugly country. On this occasion the train passed through several miles of poor-looking scrubby land which had not even been thought worth the trouble of cultivation.

Williamsfield, the nearest railway station to Mandeville, is about five miles distant from the latter place. These larger stations are well attended by buggies, which have generally two horses attached, partly on account of the occasional steepness of the otherwise good roads, and partly because every white stranger is supposed to be a tourist who is ready to spend his money freely. Taking my seat in one of these carriages, I asked the black driver to bring me to some lodging where the charges were moderate and not to one of those expensive places erected for rich visitors. The drive was pleasant, through a gradual ascent of green and fertile uplands, Mandeville lying more than two thousand feet above the sea-level. On arriving at the outskirts of the little town, however, I was much annoyed at seeing the driver enter the grounds of one of those great hotels which were my special aversion, and, making him stop, I asked why he had acted contrary to my instructions. He replied confidently, "Oh, my missus will put you up as cheap as anyone else," for I had actually got into the buggy of the hotel without knowing it. In the meantime the manageress was awaiting us in the porch, so it was necessary to go to the door in order to explain the cause of the delay. On hearing my pecuniary objections to her nice-looking house, she offered to make a slight reduction on ordinary hotel prices, but this was not sufficient for me. Finally, she made a further reduction, whereupon I promised to give her the preference at the same price, and not being able to arrange for cheaper accommodation in a hurried drive to some places a little further on, I returned and accepted her offer. I feel bound not to mention the name of the fine hotel or the greatly reduced charge at which I was received, being in fact no more than had been asked at a house of much more humble appearance.

The usually extravagant hotel tariff in Jamaica is a disadvantage which certainly tends to exclude middle-class people, who will not go to such an expensive Island when they can obtain accommodation more suitable to their means elsewhere, as the home comforts of Barbados and the scenery of Grenada and Dominica will probably rival whatever inducements Jamaica can offer in these respects, yet



the prices ruling in these three smaller Islands are considerably lower. If, however, money is no object Jamaica presents a combination of luxury and scenery hardly obtainable in other parts of the British West Indies. Many of these large hotels are said not to be a pecuniary success, thereby helping to bear out my opinion, that many visitors of moderate means would bring in a greater harvest than a few rich ones. Perhaps it would be unfair to cite the present instance as an example, owing to the deterrent effect of the earthquake which made tourists scarce, for during my three or four days' residence there was not another visitor in the hotel, and it was rather pitiful to see the continually empty dining-room with its tables laid out for guests who never came, and the artificially stained floors which frequently required waxing, all signs that money was being expended without any return for it.

Mandeville is rather a good sample of a little Jamaican country town, but unfortunately there was no rising ground in the immediate vicinity suitable for taking a comprehensive view. Its nucleus consists of a large square of business houses with a plot of grass in the centre. The surrounding country, although pleasing to the eye, was a decided disappointment for photographic purposes. The very elevation which makes it such a good health resort does not favour the development of that tropical vegetation which we associate with the West Indies, where at any altitude over two thousand feet the coco-nut palm becomes scarce and the fruit of the few which grew here did not ripen as well as those on lower ground. Thus the sloping uplands were fertile rather than picturesque, the verdant appearance being caused by the greater rainfall and the heavy dew which dripped so constantly from the roofs by night that it sounded like rain. At the side of many of the houses were barbecues or floorings of cement for the purpose of drying the coffee which finds a suitable home in this moist and elevated district.

After spending a few days here, I returned to Williamsfield and took the train to May Pen, about twenty miles on the way back towards Kingston. Arriving here early in the afternoon I left my luggage at the railway station and walked with the camera over my shoulder to Denbigh estate, relying on my letter of introduction to ensure me a favourable reception.

This plantation is only two or three miles from May Pen, but even at this short distance I was not sure whether it was the correct thing to arrive on foot, when such an action might involve my host in the contempt with which the white pedestrian is regarded by the British negro, who will, however, make an effort to get something out of the unpromising looking stranger by addressing him thus: "Got a copper for a poor boy, uncle?" The "poor boy" being often a hulking negro bigger than yourself. And on receiving a negative answer the "poor boy" may remark with a blend of familiarity and insolence: "Uncle must be a very poor man." It may be argued that this style of speech does no harm, nevertheless it is somewhat naturally resented by many strangers, and in my opinion it detracts from the pleasure of walking in Jamaica. Fortunately this objection does not



apply to the foreign West Indies, or even to those British possessions where French is still spoken, from which it may be inferred that British contact has a more debasing effect on the negro than that of foreign nations. Whether the inference be correct or not, there is no doubt as to the fact that, in the foreign islands and in those British ones which have never been thoroughly anglicized, the negroes are generally more respectful to white people and more self-respecting in refraining from begging.

On arriving at Denbigh I was made welcome by the manager, who invited me to remain for the night. The following morning I took two fairly successful views of the canefield and the factory. In the foreground of the canefield, between the negro women, may be noticed one of those East Indians who are employed on this estate, where they live apart in a row of huts or barracks about half a mile from the house and the main buildings. Soon after my first arrival in Jamaica the sight of these immigrants had caused me to ask a negro why coolies should be brought to the Island when the black natives often found it hard to obtain employment. The negro replied that the coolies were brought because their work cost less. The manager of Denbigh now informed me that this was not the case and that coolie labour is in reality more expensive than that of the negro, but has the great advantage of being more reliable; for, although the negro will work well for a limited period, he is fond of taking a holiday at inconvenient times, in which case part of the crop might be lost, while the coolie, being indentured for a period, cannot go away. On this estate, however, the negroes were doing all the carting work and it will be noticed that the whole group who are unloading cane in front of the factory are native blacks. Coolie labour will be subsequently discussed in speaking of Trinidad, which is the only West Indian island where it is extensively employed.

Few of those who have never been to the West Indies realize the perfection of the machinery used in the elaboration of the cane-juice. Brown sugar can indeed be made by a comparatively simple method which will be described in speaking of Barbados, but the higher grades of white sugar require a very complicated treatment, so it were better not to enter into the details of the "vacuum pan" process. In Jamaica, however, rum is even a more important export, and on some estates the cane is crushed with the object of making this alone, instead of treating it as a by-product of sugar. The result of my visit to this plantation left a decided impression that it requires a very able man to be the competent manager of an estate which includes such diverse branches as the growing of cane, the management of high-class machinery and the manufacture of sugar and rum.

There is a tendency to look upon all the West Indies as places which have a similar climate and are therefore suitable for the same kinds of tropical agriculture. This is by no means the case, although the frequency with which sugarcane used to be cultivated in so many places gave an appearance of truth to the supposition. When, however, sugar fell so much in value as only to pay when the cane was grown under the most favourable conditions, several of the Islands turned their attention to other crops. The situation of any part of the



West Indies a little nearer to, or further from, the equator does not seem to make a very appreciable difference in the climate, but the elevation above the sea-level has a marked effect on the temperature and the rainfall. Thus all kinds of tropical vegetation have their favourite locality, and grow at a disadvantage when removed from it.

The coco-nut palm thrives almost everywhere along the low-lying shore, where it can enjoy proximity to the sea, a warm and equable temperature and light sandy soil. Sugarcane appears to be one of those crops which will stand a maximum of heat and a minimum of rain, for this reason flourishing in the hotter and dryer lowlands of Jamaica and almost everywhere in Barbados, where there may be said to be no high land. In the latter country the rainfall is only about sixty inches, while in the cane-growing districts of Jamaica it is probably not much greater, although exceeding one hundred inches in the central ranges. Cocoa does well in places which are kept moist by their elevation or at least by the proximity of mountains which induce an excessive rainfall, and has thus been successfully planted in the highlands of Jamaica and of several of the other islands. Coffee always prefers a considerable elevation, appearing at its best in the humid mountainous regions, some two to four thousand feet above the sea-level.

It must indeed appear strange to those who have never been in the West Indies to hear places which have such a heavy rainfall described as fine climates, when the British Islands are so cloudy and damp with a far less amount. The tropical rain, however, falls heavily but only for a short time, after which the hot sun dries up the surface ground quickly, and the only places where protracted humidity is found are on the mountains, or to a far less extent just at their feet. Thus Jamaica from its superior size exemplifies the change of climate caused by elevation better than the smaller islands and may be said to have three zones—the lowest, with which we are most familiar in the typical views of West Indian scenery, where the glorious coco-nut palm abounds and the vegetation is thoroughly tropical; the intermediate, where these plants are becoming scarce, but where subtropical agriculture flourishes; and the mountain summits, which are uncultivated and in whose misty regions only ferns, scrub and forest trees grow.

Receiving an invitation from the family with whom I had been living at Gayle on my first arrival, I was now able to enjoy their hospitality for a week, without being troubled by those anxieties which had beset me on the former occasion. This district, without containing any of the picked beauty spots mentioned in guide books, presents a combination of scenery typical of the prettier parts of Jamaica. Hilly rather than mountainous, its elevation of from one thousand to fifteen hundred feet is sufficient to impart a perceptible freshness to the air, without apparently affecting the full development of tropical foliage. On these fertile slopes grow coco-nut palms, cocoa and spice trees, but of course the principal produce is the banana, now so largely exported to the United States. The valleys contain those swiftly-flowing rocky streams generally found in the more mountainous parts of the West Indies, forming in places pools of cool water quite large enough to bathe in.





Carting Cane on Denbigh Estate.  
The Factory Chimney is seen behind the Cane.



Unloading Cane at the Factory.





Market, Village and View at Gayle.



Peasant's Cottage at Elgin Town, about three miles from Gayle.



One of the family accompanied me to a charming view four miles away in the direction of the northern coast. Here at a slightly greater elevation than Gayle, although only three miles from the sea, was a waterfall of considerable size, which made me regret that I had not brought my camera with me, as one of Jamaica's rivers ought to figure in every collection of its representative views. Even the cottages of the poorest peasants in these parts have a grace imparted to them by the surrounding foliage, which contrasts strongly with the bare appearance of buildings of a similar kind in some of the other islands. In Barbados, for example, the negro's home may be just as good inside, but there is nothing picturesque in the exterior, which stands out like a gigantic box in the open space around it.

The future of Jamaica lies to a great extent in the hands of these peasant proprietors, who will always be able to maintain themselves by agricultural labour, even though the large estates may fail to work out dividends on the capital sunk in them. The negro indeed has always been a cultivator of the soil and appears to greater advantage when seen barefoot in a jungle of tropical foliage with a machete or some rustic implement in his hands, than when walking proudly along the road dressed in his best black suit, and perhaps, if the distance be far, carrying his boots.

Since the time of my former visit to Gayle a new enterprise had been started for the purpose of making flour out of bananas, and this industry had been beneficial to the district by creating a more continual demand for the fruit. Formerly the only buyer had been the United Fruit Company, which, although taking large quantities for exportation, could hardly use up the supply grown in the neighbourhood. The new company had begun business in a cautious and tentative way. When the United Fruit Company was buying its supplies, the flour-making company often stopped working, so as not to raise the price by competition, but when there was a glut of bananas, owing to the fruit company having suspended its operations temporarily, the flour-making company began afresh.

The chief difficulty in making this foodstuff is said to consist in the amount of tannin in the banana, owing to which the product turns a dark colour, a defect which the new company had been said to remove by means of a process for extracting the tannin. This was so interesting that I walked to the factory, which was only half a mile from my friends' house, for the purpose of obtaining a photograph and details. I had reckoned, however, without my host. The manager received me courteously but intimated that it was against rules to allow outsiders to see anything connected with the work. Such caution was really useless, as the small amount of technical knowledge which a stranger might be able to carry away could not be compared with what must have already been acquired by their own workmen, several of whom were visible inside the building.

The enormous development in the exportation of bananas within the last few years has in great measure enabled Jamaica to bear the heavy losses sustained through the fall in the price of sugar. It must, however, give rise to serious reflection that a trade which constitutes more than half of the value of the total exports, and about four times as much as the combined produce of the sugarcane, in



rum and sugar, should lie chiefly in the hands of a foreign country. The shortness of the voyage must give an advantage to the sale of Jamaican bananas in the United States rather than in England. This, however, is no reason why British enterprise should have abandoned the carrying trade of the principal export of the Colony. The upshot of existing conditions is, of course, to make the Island utterly dependent on the United States, which have at any time the power to ruin the prosperity of Jamaica by placing a prohibitive tariff on fruit, and while it does not appear likely at present that the United States will do so, either from a desire for cheap food, a wish to make these islands feel that their prosperity is bound up in the Union, or owing to the amount of American capital invested in the banana trade, the immediate result has been to detach the interests of Jamaica from the rest of the British West Indies, Canada, and Great Britain itself.

This curious anomaly of a colony whose chief industry lies in the hands of foreigners is aggravated by the fact that other considerable exports, such as coffee and cocoa, are admitted free of duty into the United States while they are taxed in Great Britain. Under these somewhat strained conditions the time seems most inopportune for Great Britain to withdraw from the Brussels Convention, which at least gave the planter some assurance that his sugar, penalized by a prohibitive duty in the United States,<sup>1</sup> should not suffer in Europe from the unfair competition of beet sugar subsidized by foreign Governments. Sugar, cocoa and coffee, not being as perishable as fresh fruit, are eminently suitable for exportation to Europe, and the more Great Britain neglects the interests of those who produce them in Jamaica, the more will these products be supplanted by the trade in fresh fruit with America, with the inevitable consequence of a desire on the part of the Jamaicans to be connected politically as well as commercially with their best market.

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<sup>1</sup> This duty is to be remitted entirely in 1916. It would, however, have been preferable that help in this direction had come from Great Britain.



## CHAPTER VII.

## IN JAMAICA.

**M**Y next expedition was made in a somewhat unusual manner. In the large yard at the side of the Queen's Hotel where I used to sleep at the time of the earthquake, a cart drawn by mules made its appearance regularly every week and returned homewards with its load on the same day. It belonged to people who lived about twenty-two miles to the north of Kingston, in a remote village called Glengoffe, for in Jamaica remoteness applies to distance from the nearest railway station, rather than to that from the capital, and Glengoffe, isolated among the hills, was harder to reach than places much further away. The absence of any hotel or lodging-house also deterred visitors from going there, but someone suggested that if I made the journey in the cart there would be no doubt about a hospitable reception on my arrival. On being told by relations of the owner that no objection would be made, it was arranged that I should go by the electric car for the first six miles, as far as the terminus of Constant Spring, where I was to wait for the cart which did not leave Kingston until late in the afternoon. When the cart came up soon after nightfall I packed myself as comfortably as I could among the bags of provisions piled up in it. My companions were three black people, the driver and his assistant in front, and a woman who was perched on the loading like myself. We were drawn by three large mules, several animals being always necessary in these steep ascents. The journey was even slower than it would have been on foot, but the West Indian night was perfect, with just such a temperature as one would desire for sitting down out of doors, the slight moisture in the air being barely sufficient to keep down the dust with which we should have been troubled during the day. For some time we travelled close to a group of market women who were returning homewards, swinging their arms as they walked and singing a rousing chorus, the words of which I could not catch.

After a good deal of jolting we arrived at the village called Stony Hill, which has not received its name without due cause. Here the driver drew up for more than half an hour, partly perhaps to rest the animals, but in great measure for his own satisfaction; although it might be now ten at night, the lights in the wayside houses showed that the village was wide awake, intent on supplying the considerable number of travellers who pass along this hilly thoroughfare with food and drink. This latter commodity was, of course, chiefly in request, for, as the coloured woman has previously remarked, "How can you have a good time of it unless you eat *and drink*?" so I took the opportunity to offer refreshment to my companions. The driver, indeed,



had already pronounced me to be a "brand new kind of buckra," which appeared to be rather complimentary, and I felt bound to act up to my character.

We now resumed our journey, slowly leaving the lights of the shanty-built village behind us in our dark ascent of the hills. When we passed the same group of market women, or they passed us, I forget which, they were still singing the same chorus, in which I could now distinguish the words "My sins are taken away, taken away," hymns being the favourite songs of these people. This, however, did not prevent them from abusing the driver of the cart for molesting their passage on the narrow road. The journey, hitherto very pleasant, became wearisome as the small hours of the morning advanced, the ascent becoming so steep that the tired mules seemed almost unequal to their task, sometimes backing ominously down the road, on which occasions the wheel had to be promptly chocked with wood or stone by the driver's assistant in order to prevent a disaster. The country now lay in that absolute silence which might be expected towards three in the morning, until we neared Glengoffe, when the most doleful sounds of voices reached our ears. The wail might stop for one or two minutes and then broke again through the night air. The driver informed me that this was a wake. Such ceremonies not infrequently take place in town, where they afford an opportunity to the negroes for singing, but the loneliness of the country invested the sound with a solemnity which could not have been acquired in streets.

We soon drew up at one of the central houses of the little village. The negroes unharnessed the tired mules and spread an awning over the cart to protect the provisions and myself from the dew which had become very perceptible in this elevated district. They then went to their homes, leaving me to pass the rest of the night in the cart, for it would not have been suitable at this inconvenient hour to disturb strangers over whom I had no claim. I now made myself as comfortable as I could in the softer part of the loading, and went to sleep with the dirge of the wake in my ears. In the morning I was made welcome at the houses of several people related to each other, so there was no lack of hospitality.

Glengoffe is an unusually picturesque village. The houses were made of wood, as indeed they generally are in Jamaica, but were not altogether built on that principle which only aims at putting up a shelter without taking appearance into consideration. In the latter part of the morning, while I was photographing the scene, a number of people returned from the burial of the person who had been "waked" on the previous night, and this will account for the number of black dresses, which are not otherwise much used. The locality is a succession of fertile hills whose well covered summits have the smiling aspect so often seen in the Island of Grenada.

On the next morning I had to consider the best means of returning. If necessary, I was quite prepared to walk, but an unusual opportunity presented itself for being driven back in the bread van of an enterprising firm which supplied this place from Kingston. The homeward journey was of a very different description to that of the toilsome ascent, as I now sat beside the driver with only the empty van behind





Glengoffe, a Village in the Hills, about twenty miles northerly from Kingston.



A Tobacco Plantation, about eight miles from Kingston and two from Constant Spring.





A Well-dressed Coloured Girl.



A Soldier of the West Indian Regiment.



us. In the colonial characteristic of putting on the pace when going downhill these Jamaican mules, driven by a black man, fully rivalled the exploits of horses in the more temperate white man's countries. The steepness of the descent made the load scarcely felt by the animals, which seemed as anxious as the driver to return home quickly, travelling at the rate of three miles in twenty minutes, an excellent average on a rough hilly road where we lost time occasionally in going slowly over dangerous places. For the greater part of the way we went at a good gallop, to the annoyance of the poor market women, who, afraid of being run over, mounted on the banks of the narrow cutting in the hillside and hailed us with abuse as we passed. Many hymns must have been interrupted, but the driver cared little and the mules less. On reaching Constant Spring I gave the driver his well-earned reward for a speedy and pleasant drive and finished the return journey to town in the electric cars.

During the latter part of the descent a view of Kingston harbour induced me to return subsequently in the hope of obtaining a good photograph of it. On climbing up the cutting beside the road in the hope of obtaining a sufficient elevation, I entered a cultivated field and walked towards a small house a few hundred yards away for the purpose of asking leave to take a photograph in what was evidently private ground. At the door of the house was an elderly man, apparently of white race, from whom I asked permission to walk through the field, but instead of answering me he inquired in Spanish from a girl at his side, "What does he say?" When, however, I spoke to him in his own language he readily gave consent, with the result that I walked about the field, which was under the cultivation of tobacco, accompanied by two lads who were probably his sons and one or two negro labourers. It was evidently the family of one of those Cuban refugees who have introduced this industry so successfully that the best brands of Jamaican cigarettes, such as those of Machado, can hardly be distinguished from Cuban productions, and are largely exported into the other British islands. The ground, however, was too low for a distant view, so I turned my attention to taking a photograph of my companions engaged in field work. The shed in which the dried tobacco leaves are hung up can be seen in the distance.

The problems connected with race and colour will be discussed in the last chapter, but a few words must here be said about Jamaicans, among whom those of white race are said to hardly number two and a half per cent. A certain number of coloured people are also to be found in the first ranks, although as a general rule the more negro blood a man has the more he gravitates towards the lower classes.

Jamaica, while sharing with Barbados the distinction of showing what has been done for negroes by British environment, presents a greater disparity in its inhabitants than any other of these British islands, thereby contrasting strongly with Barbados, where the limited space and density of population tend to eliminate provincialism, so that most of the negroes speak good English from coming into contact with each other and with the white people. In Jamaica, however, while the speech in the more progressive parts is almost equally good, there are many in the remote country districts who seldom frequent the principal centres and thus develop an extraordinary



dialect which a stranger finds hard to understand. Even the names of people become so modified that they present a new aspect, as in the following instance. A child had been brought to be baptized, when the clergyman asked what name she was to be called. "Floranga" was the answer. "There's no such name," replied the clergyman. "I'll christen her Florence."

Many of the foreign-sounding local names are corruptions of Spanish words, although so mutilated as hardly to be recognizable, such as that of Montego Bay, derived from the Spanish *manteca* (fat or butter); and the way in which this language has been so thoroughly effaced in a country where it was once spoken gives rise to the reflection that although the negro assimilates the customs of a white nation easily, the veneer has not much stability and would as readily change if he were transferred to other masters, or disappear if he were left to himself.

Among these mutilated names of foreign origin the word maroon is conspicuous, few Jamaicans knowing the primary meaning of this word, although they can inform you that in the times of slavery the maroons were free negro mountaineers who had obtained privileges from the Government for services rendered during the insurrections of their black fellow-countrymen. The term has even crept into the English language to a certain extent, for in old books of adventure by sea it was not unusual to read that a sailor had been "marooned," by which appears to have been meant that, if a man had committed some action which made his presence in the ship undesirable, he was put on shore with a small stock of provisions on some uninhabited island and left to shift for himself. The name is said to be an abbreviation of *cimarrón*, derived from the Spanish word *cima* (summit), evidently inferring that the escaped slaves took to the mountain tops as the most likely places to elude pursuit, and is still applied in the French and Spanish West Indies to domestic animals which have become wild. My attention was attracted to this secondary meaning in the book called "Camps in the Caribbees," written by that interesting American writer, Mr. Ober. The naturalist had gone out in the wilder parts of Dominica, when his guide called out suddenly, "*Un chat maron!*"<sup>1</sup>—which the writer goes on to explain meant a domestic cat gone wild and not any species of tiger-cat. The French creoles have evidently adopted this term from the Spanish, being given in a Spanish-American dictionary as a Cuban word for "a negro, or a domestic animal which escapes."

The following amusing "Jamaican alphabet," taken from Mr. Robert T. Hill's<sup>2</sup> comprehensive book on the West Indian Islands, gives an idea of the manner in which an ignorant country woman might be expected to speak. Some of these words are used only in Jamaica, others, such as "buckra" and "duppy," are known in all the other English-speaking islands,

<sup>1</sup> Here spelt with only one "r" as if to show the first step towards the anglicized form.

<sup>2</sup> "Cuba and Porto Rico, with the other Islands of the West Indies," by Robert T. Hill (of the United States Geological Survey).



## JAMAICAN ALPHABET.

"A is for Assinoo<sup>1</sup>; see how him stan'.  
 B is for Buckra,<sup>2</sup> berry bad man.  
 C is for Pussy; him name Maria.  
 D is for Duppy<sup>3</sup>; him eye shine like fire.  
 E is for Eel; him catch in de ferry.  
 F is for Figgler<sup>4</sup>; him play sweet, berry.  
 G is for Governor; him live at King's house.  
 H is for Dry-Harbor, place poor as church mouse.  
 I is for Miysell, when I sick I go to bed.  
 J is for John Crow<sup>5</sup>; he have a peel head.  
 K is for Kalaloo<sup>6</sup>; berry nice when him boil.  
 L is for Lizard; but him tail 'poil.  
 M is for Monkey; just look 'pon him face.  
 N is for Nana<sup>7</sup>; him cap trim wid lace.  
 O is for Oliphant<sup>8</sup>; him have a big mouf.  
 P is for Potto<sup>9</sup>; when night come he go out.  
 Q is for Quattie<sup>10</sup>; I beg you one massa, please.  
 R is for Ratta; him tiptoe 'pon cheese.  
 S is for Snake; him crawl in de grass.  
 T is for Toad, so far'ard an' fast.  
 U is for Uncle. Boy, you tell him howdee.<sup>11</sup>  
 V is for Vervine; make very good tea.  
 W X Y Hi! I really forget.  
 Z is for Zebedee, mending his net."

In Jamaica there is no such thing as a special costume for the coloured and black female population, such as exists in the French West Indies. The poorer women, however, wear on their heads those bright-coloured kerchiefs, which vary greatly in the different islands as to the fashion of their arrangement. These details will be better described by pictures than by words, although it may be said generally that the kerchiefs are worn with the ends hanging down in the English-speaking islands, such as Jamaica and Barbados, while in those where French is spoken the arrangement is more elaborate with the ends of the kerchief standing up. There is, in fact, nothing remarkable about the print dress generally worn, except perhaps the "reef" which is taken in below the waist, so that the wearer may not trip over her skirt when engaged in active labour, and even the "reef" disappears on Sundays and holidays. Nor do either the men or the women wear those serviceable palm-leaf hats so often used by the poorer country people in the foreign islands, where this cooler and more picturesque head-dress is preferred to the dilapidated old felt hat generally used by the negro who speaks English. The better class of working women and girls, however, dress very tastefully on special occasions, when they follow closely the costumes of white people, as the accompanying

<sup>1</sup> Assinoo = ass; <sup>2</sup> Buckra = white man; <sup>3</sup> Duppy = ghost; <sup>4</sup> Figgler = fiddler; <sup>5</sup> John Crow = turkey-buzzard; <sup>6</sup> Kalaloo = kind of bird; <sup>7</sup> Nana = baby; <sup>8</sup> Oliphant = elephant; <sup>9</sup> Potto = owl; <sup>10</sup> Quattie = three ha'pence; <sup>11</sup> Howdee = how do you do?



photograph will show. This coloured girl had been on a visit to her aunt in Kingston, but was being sent home because she had the audacity to become engaged, while her cousin, the aunt's daughter, had remained unattached. Cases of this kind have even been heard of, like the story of "Massa Noah," in—Africa. The poorer part of the male population often dress in a somewhat dilapidated and ragged manner, the cause, however, lying in the poverty of the individual rather than from any desire to neglect appearances, as the negro is by nature fond of adornment. In this respect the uniform of the West Indian Regiment is certainly calculated to make the service popular.

These black troops, formerly quartered in several of the other islands, are now only to be found in Jamaica. Their everyday clothing, a plain but serviceable khaki, does not call for any special comment, but their dress uniform presents a gorgeous appearance in which colours and style vie with each other in making conspicuous. It is adapted from that of the French zouave, having a turban with a tassel hanging from it, a bright red jacket, and baggy trousers encased to a little above the ankles in white spatter-dashes. Quite apart from this, however, they are really a fine-looking body of men who would do good work anywhere, especially in a climate unsuitable for Europeans. As a proof of their fidelity a story is told of how, in an African campaign, two of these soldiers (who were Barbadians) allowed their white officer to sleep on their bodies at night, so that his health might not suffer from lying on the damp ground. They all returned to the West Indies in safety, when the officer's family in gratitude invited these two men to dine with them. The subject of the photograph is evidently a good type. He was determined that the glory of his tassel should not be lost to view by hanging down behind, so, with a motion of his head, he shook the tassel upon his turban where it is seen lying.

In the matter of religion the Jamaican negroes, in common with those of the other islands, are followers of almost every sect of Christianity; this, however, does not prevent some of the more ignorant from resorting secretly to "obeah" when they are in difficulties, the chief difference in this respect between the British islands and the independent Republic of Haiti being that, in the former the priest of obeah is prosecuted by the law, while in the latter he may practise with impunity. A ridiculous case of this kind was related in a Jamaican newspaper. The client of a certain obeah-woman was discontented with her failure to help him and determined to betray her, so he returned to her house with a black constable so well disguised as a countryman that the woman fell into the trap. Thinking that the newcomer was some ignorant peasant who was in trouble about the failure of his crops, she told him that there was something in his field which prevented things from growing, but that she would "fix" it for him. The price of her services was arranged at three pounds and a goat for an offering to obeah, but when the supposed countryman put his hand into his pocket and pulled out the handcuffs, instead of the money, the wretched woman saw her mistake and begged for mercy.

The religious fervour which had been excited to an unusual extent



by the late calamity had not altogether subsided. Even before the earthquake the Salvation Army had been a popular institution, but in addition to this we now had several street preachers who warned the people that, unless they amended their ways, another visitation would follow. One day, seeing a figure dressed in red at the other side of the park, I walked out of curiosity in that direction, thinking that the Governor must be there, owing to the colour being the same as that worn by his Excellency's servants. It was, however, only one of these religious orators who went by the name of the Red Prophet.

The Government did not look upon these votaries with favour from an apprehension that these prophecies of disaster might have an undesirable effect on the more ignorant people, and shortly afterwards there was a notice in the newspaper that a prophet, corresponding in some respects to the one just mentioned, had been brought before the magistrate and imprisoned, in default of paying the fine imposed. It certainly seems a somewhat arbitrary proceeding to send a man to prison for merely expounding the usually accepted tenets of our religion, while in some English possessions, in—Africa of course, the streets are lined with the advertisements of seers, astrologers, crystal-gazers and other professors of the occult sciences, and the Governments of the British West Indies would adopt a more straightforward policy if they openly administered paternal government to their negroes, instead of making legal innovations for all, with the intention of preventing the negro from doing what would be lawful elsewhere and with the result of occasionally netting a white man in some unusual regulation.

For some time past I had been considering which of the Islands would offer the most inducement for a visit before going to Barbados on my way to Europe, and the neighbouring Republic of Haiti seemed to present unusual advantages to a person who, like myself, was obliged to lay out his hard-earned savings to best advantage. In the "Black Republic," if anywhere, I should be able to get out of that groove into which everything is regulated in a tourist resort like Jamaica, and to see things from a different aspect to those who have never visited the wilder parts of the West Indies. The present opportunity was most favourable, for, next to Cuba, Hispaniola, which comprises the two Republics of Haiti and Santo Domingo, is by far the nearest island to Jamaica, and I now began to make inquiries about the means of arriving there before forming what may be called a plan of campaign. After finding that the Hamburg-America Line offered the best means of transit, the next question to resolve was the port of destination, for even in Jamaica little is known about this neighbouring Island. The short period of one month, which was to be the limit of my visit, gave little prospect of seeing more than one locality, under which circumstance the advantages and disadvantages of various ports were so evenly balanced that it was hard to decide between them.

By disembarking at Port-au-Prince, the capital of Haiti, I should only have a short sea voyage of less than twenty-four hours, with the advantage of spending nearly the whole month on shore in the "Black Republic." But should I be able to make myself understood? My French was somewhat rusty from many years' want of practice and



there was reason to believe that this language was so badly spoken in Haiti, that there might be great difficulty in understanding the *patois*. The hostile attitude also which the people were said to assume towards white strangers made the result a matter of some uncertainty. On the other hand, a trip to Santo Domingo, the capital of the Republic of that name, would necessitate a sea voyage of a good many days, owing to the slowness of these cargo steamers which call at so many ports, with the disadvantage of having my time on shore considerably shortened. The language of the country, however, was Spanish, with which I was familiar, and the people were said to be favourably disposed towards strangers.

Finally the desire to see the "Black Republic" made me resolve to stop at Port-au-Prince unless there were some unforeseen reason for travelling further. On making inquiries at the office of the Hamburg-America Line a new difficulty presented itself. They carried no second class; thus it would be necessary to choose between a very expensive first-class fare, costing nearly three pounds, and a deck passage costing between twenty and twenty-five shillings. My recollections of deck passages in South American Adventures were vivid enough, but one night does not give time to become squalid, so my limited means induced me to try the cheaper fare. In order to ensure admittance into this somewhat inaccessible country it was necessary to be provided with a passport, which I now obtained from the Haitian Consul at Kingston by paying two dollars for a formal document written in correct French. After arranging these preliminaries I returned to the shipping office to buy my ticket, when another obstacle stood in my way—I could not go to Haiti without first obtaining permission from the Jamaican police!

Those who have travelled much are not easily surprised, although it was enough to astonish the most seasoned cosmopolitan to find that a British subject, who was not even a native of Jamaica and had hardly lived eighteen months in the West Indies, could not visit a neighbouring island which was at peace with Great Britain without obtaining a police permit. It looked as if Russian laws had been adopted by the Jamaican Government. Haiti had, in fact, been proclaimed as a "prohibited" place, and the following seems to have been the chain of reasoning which had led to the making of such an arbitrary regulation.

Haiti is an exceptional country in which revolutions take place with comparative frequency. It is very near Jamaica and the Government of that Island wished to prevent its negroes from going where they might be mixed up in rows, from the consequences of which there might be considerable difficulty in rescuing them. Most of the people who wished to go to Haiti were negroes, and still more so those who took deck passages. Still, giving every credit for the goodness of the intention, such a restraint is very "paternal" to say the least, and is more applicable to Jamaican negroes than to European strangers. No attempt is here made to prove that paternal government is not a good thing for negroes, but only that, if done, it should be done openly, so as not to include others for whom it was not intended.

I now went to the police station, where, on mentioning my



business, the black police referred me to the white officer. After some explanations I was handed a permit in which a list of the conditions which would entitle a person to leave the Island were printed, the one affecting me being: "Is not a native of, or domiciled in, Jamaica."

The few necessities for my journey comprised only a small trunk and a little handbag, besides of course my photographic outfit, as I intended to return to Jamaica on my way to Barbados, and therefore left all my other effects in the storeroom of the Queen's Hotel. Besides myself there were three or four other deck passengers, who seemed to be Haitians, being all black or coloured French-speaking people. Just before the steamer started one of the black water-police, whose business it was to inspect the permits, asked in a most apologetic manner if I had the necessary paper, as everyone who had been working at the hospital was a marked person, and the good fellow felt that his duty obliged him to do what was out of place.

The discomfort of the following night will not be easily forgotten. The weather became so rough that the waves swept the low deck on which we were situated. I was sitting on a small box and, each time that the water rushed over the planks, was obliged to raise my feet so as not to get wet. Towards the small hours of the morning some of the German sailors took pity on me and lashed a bench to a sheltered place so that I might be able to lie down, but the bench was so narrow that a lurch from the steamer threw me down on the deck. This, however, did not happen again, and I was even able to sleep a little. When we anchored late next morning at Port-au-Prince, a short distance from land, whatever ideas I might have had about prolonging the voyage were dispelled by the sufferings of the previous night.

In the boat which carried me to the shore several of the black people were discussing some subject in words which I could not understand, the *patois* being very impossible. At last, however, some better educated man said in intelligible French, "What do you wish? In fifty years we shall all be Americans," and a moody silence followed this political forecast.



## CHAPTER VIII.

## IN HAITI.

**E**VEN an experienced traveller may be excused for a feeling of curiosity, not altogether unmixed with apprehension, on landing in what is somewhat ominously called the "Black Republic," where fetish worship exists and human sacrifices are rumoured to take place. My first impressions, however, were by no means disagreeable. The black customs-house official gave less trouble than in many more civilized countries, and, with a gracious bow of French origin, facilitated my exit with a minimum of delay.

I had asked the man who was carrying my trunk to bring me to an hotel where the charges were moderate, and now followed him along a principal thoroughfare near the sea front, where the good stores and business houses of foreign merchants have imparted quite a creditable appearance to this large town of some seventy thousand inhabitants. On turning away from the sea, we arrived at a fairly good street, some ten minutes' walk from the landing-place, and entered a two-storied wooden building where a presentable lady, rather lighter in colour than a quadroon, came forward to receive me. My French had become so rusty from many years' want of practice that I presently asked her if she understood Spanish, in which we now continued the conversation, but, after a time, she asked if I did not speak English, which, without exactly being her native tongue, was very nearly so, she having come from one of the French-speaking British islands where English is generally understood by all the educated people. We soon came to terms about board and lodging, which were to cost me an equivalent to about four shillings and sixpence daily, a decidedly moderate price in comparison to what would be charged in most of the British West Indies for such good accommodation. Of course the bargain was made in gourdes, the currency of the country. This sum is said to have been once worth a dollar when the Island had a coinage of intrinsic value, but, since the silver has disappeared, the gourde, represented now by paper notes and nickel coinage, has fallen to the value of about nine or ten pence. Unfortunately the rate of exchange on English sovereigns was so bad that on each pound there was a loss of about half-a-crown, which might have been to a great extent avoided by bringing American gold. The unusual occurrence of English gold taking a markedly inferior place to that of another nation is extremely suggestive of the waning British influence in the West Indies.

The hotel was of fair standing. There was not much sleeping accommodation, but the food was sufficiently good to cause the table



to be frequented by many who did not live in the house, which thus assumed the appearance of a restaurant at meal-times. It must not, however, be imagined that the greater part of these people were negroes, as most of the mercantile houses and leading stores belonged to white people, and their principal employees were frequently of the same colour. I used to converse, generally in Spanish, with one of those who had been in the Island more than ten years. He must have been invaluable for foreign correspondence, being proficient in at least four languages, but, although French was of course included among these, he had never learnt the Haitian *patois*, with which his work never brought him into contact. A young German storekeeper and the master of the railway-station were also constant visitors. The former, like most of his commercial countrymen, understood English well, and the latter, almost a white man, spoke good French. Thus the society of the house was truly cosmopolitan and to a large extent European, although we had occasionally some well-dressed coloured or even black men at table, and the babel of languages may be exemplified by the acquirements of the landlady, who spoke in French to her European husband, in French, Spanish or English, as the occasion required, to her guests, while she conversed with the servants and the street-vendors in a *patois* which would have puzzled a Parisian.

This *patois*, dignified among its better class adherents by the name of "creole," but which unsympathetic foreigners would be likely to call "nigger French," is very similar without being quite identical in all the French-speaking islands. Some of the principal changes through which the words and construction pass will be mentioned in explaining the *chanson créole* in the last chapter on Trinidad. The few educated people speak French as well as *patois*, although the latter is the only reliable means of conversation with the illiterate. French is, however, of considerable use in Haiti, being the official language of the country and spoken in all the principal business houses, while even the most ignorant negroes will partially understand what you say in that language, although you will not understand much of their *patois* in return.

Haiti has obtained such a sinister reputation that for the first few days I thought there might be some risk in walking about by myself, but it soon became evident that there was no danger of being attacked as long as one behaved with prudence. Not that a white stranger is regarded favourably, for several times when I was in the suburbs with a newly-made acquaintance some negro would ask my companion what "*ce blanc*" was doing—from the motive, however, of showing that the black race was here dominant, rather than with the idea of doing me any harm.

The strangest anomaly about the place seemed to be that, while the political power was black, the commercial power was white, for the lower a business stood in the social scale, the more likely it was to be in the hands of the native population; thus a petty store for selling articles of small value, or a rum shop, would be likely to be represented by a negro. A visitor would certainly be disappointed if he expected to see anything outrageous in the streets, where the general appearance of the houses, together with the sound of the language,



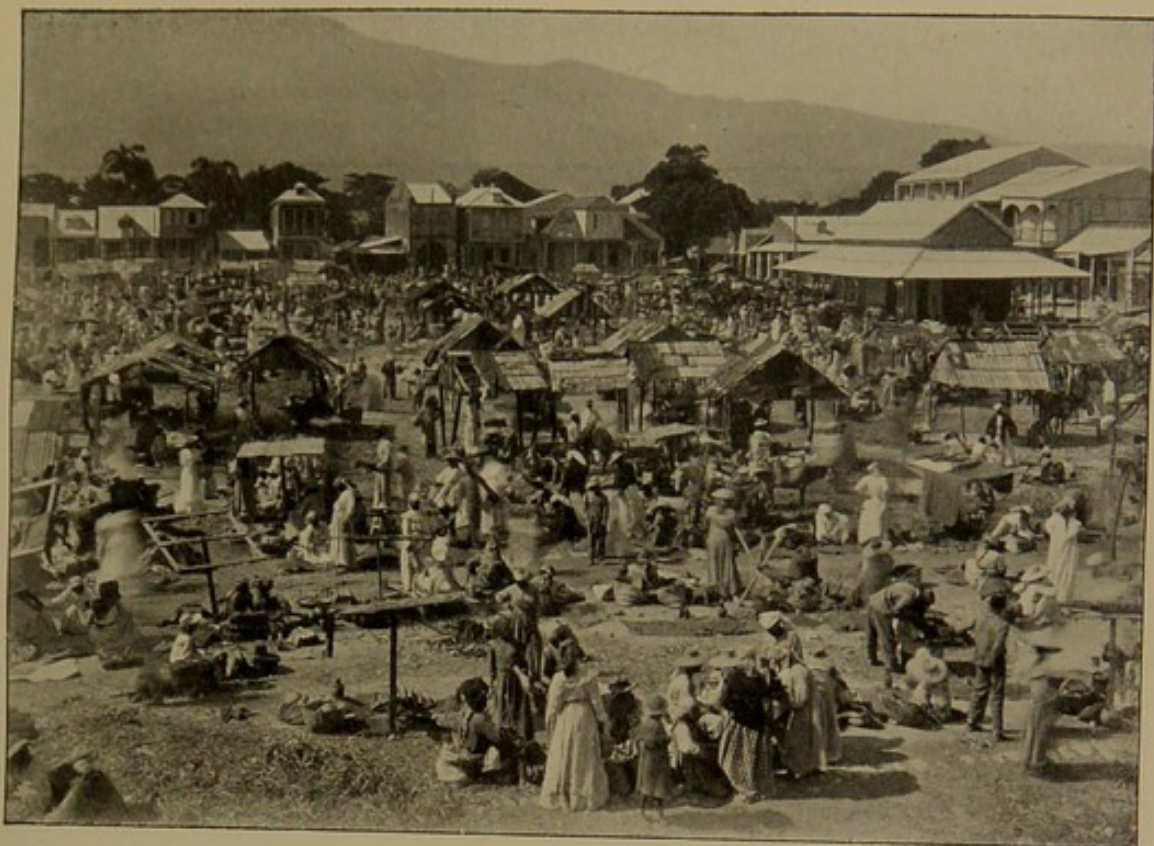
and the blouse of the black workman might almost encourage the belief that this was one of the French-speaking islands owned by European Powers. By degrees, however, the impression would be conveyed that everything, although running in the same general grooves, was dirty and second-rate. The principal business area, indeed, occupied chiefly by foreign merchants, might call for no unfavourable comment, but on reaching the truly native parts of the town the senses of sight and smell protested equally against the huge gutters which could only be avoided by walking on the raised tram-line and the piles of refuse at the sides of the road.

My first photographic attempts were made in the market-places, which are generally good subjects for representative views. The *Marché d'Hippolyte*, in that area which is largely under European influence, shows the capital to best advantage. More in consistence with the character of the place is the *Marché du Cathédrale*, a little further back towards the suburbs, where what may be called a native market is held daily. This large square, formed by rows of fairly well built houses, is a scene of great animation on Saturdays, when a large number of country people sell their produce, although it presents a somewhat untidy appearance owing to the number of flimsy palm-leaf shelters and the refuse with which the ground is continually littered. Some coloured people at the side of this market allowed me to photograph it from their house, but on entering the market itself I nearly got into trouble with the people, who, although by no means offensive, became excited on seeing the camera planted in their midst, and made such a commotion that some police officers appeared on the scene and with violent gesticulations warned me of "*le concours des gens*," so that I was well contented to escape without damage to the camera or to myself. Most of these market-sellers are women, who do not show any decided inferiority to those of the same class in the rest of the West Indies. They generally ride on their donkeys or mules, which are expected to be able to carry their owner in addition to the load of garden produce. When one of these animals collapsed with its rider just in front of me the woman made nothing of it, and, helping the donkey to rise, she went off on its back as if nothing had happened. These women do not wear the kerchiefs on their heads as stylishly as in the other French-speaking islands, often using a large palm-leaf hat to protect them against the sun.

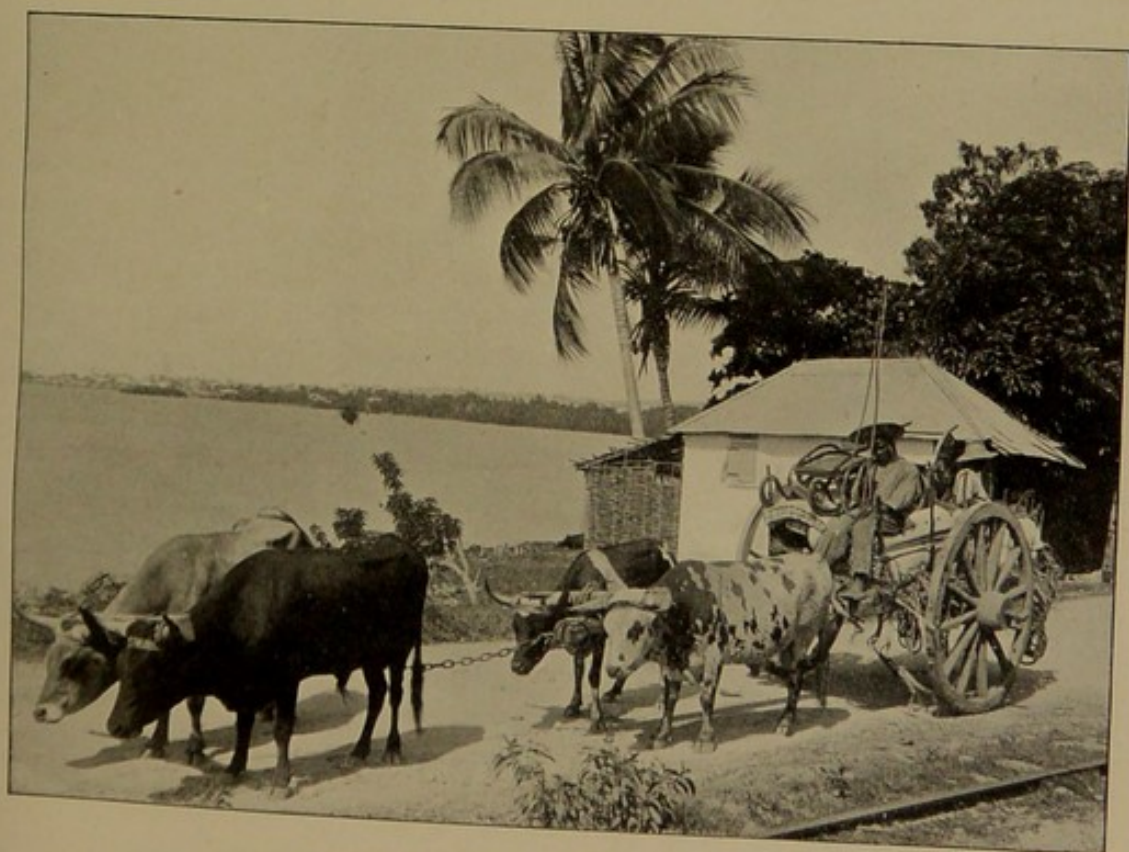
The cathedral, from which this market takes its name, lies a little to the left of the view in the photograph, helping, in fact, to form one side of the square. When I entered this fine solidly-built edifice on Sunday while the service was being held, the congregation, who were chiefly black or coloured, seemed just as neatly dressed as those in the other islands on similar occasions. The white priest, presumably French, was in the midst of his sermon, the subject of which was, "The duty towards your neighbour." In his vigorous exhortation he made a decided allusion to the formerly savage state of his hearers by warning them that, if they did not perform the said duty, they would relapse into barbarism ("*Vous retomberez dans la barbarie*").

One of the chief features which distinguishes Port-au-Prince from the capitals of other West Indian islands is the quantity of its black soldiers, the army of which is said to number at least twenty thousand.





Marché du Cathédrale.



Ox-cart on the Road to Bizonton.  
Port-au-Prince in the distance over the water.





Force à la Loi.



Some of these are quartered in small barracks or guard-houses at short distances apart throughout the town, and in a central place, where a large number of soldiers were stationed, a cannon was ominously planted so as to command the thoroughfare. In like manner there is always a strong guard near the President's house, which is partially concealed by a large enclosure, said to be bristling with cannon inside. During the day these soldiers seem to be merely lounging in a slack and useless sentry duty, but at night they shout some watchword from time to time. This is the period when they appear most unlike civilized troops by occasionally making a noise which can only be compared to a whoop or yell. These uncouth sounds give the impression that the town is under an ill-regulated martial law and make strangers little inclined to walk through the streets after dark, when an encounter with these men or a fall into one of the open drains might be the result.

I asked one of the foreign residents what was the use of all these soldiers, who would be quite inefficient to oppose any powerful nation which wished to take possession of the Island ; the answer was that the only object of all this armament was to keep their own people in subjection. Such, indeed, appears to have been really the case, for not long afterwards there was an insurrection. Some revolutionary Haitians landed from abroad, expecting to be joined by many of their countrymen in their attempt to overthrow the President. Unfortunately for them their munitions of war, which were expected to arrive at this juncture from the United States, never came in time, being said to have been detained in America, and the insurgents were thus quite unable to oppose the army sent against them. Some of the foreign Consulates sheltered many of the defeated faction, refusing to surrender them to the Haitian Government, which would certainly have put them to death, and eventually the refugees were quietly embarked in safety. It seems rather a high-handed measure for foreign Consulates to shelter those who are rebelling against their own Government, and affords another proof that Haiti is not like other places.

An educated Haitian subsequently sent a long article on the subject of this revolution to a Jamaican newspaper, in which he explained that they had a legal right to rebel because the President had seized the supreme power without having been duly elected. This right, however, would have been of little avail to defeated insurgents, as the following story will show. In the time of a former President another insurrection had been put down, when some of the leaders who had been taken prisoners were condemned to death. One of the President's advisers warned his chief that one of these condemned men was a French subject and that there might be trouble in consequence, "We will kill him first and pay the indemnity afterwards," was the grim reply.

When these Haitian soldiers are on leave they present a miserable appearance, clothed in a travesty of a uniform which may be designated as "regimental rags." On great occasions, however, when some general parade takes place, the uniform is decent-looking. And in like manner with the police, few of whom have the prosperous look of the two members of the force in the photograph. These men belonged to a station close beside the hotel, where the police were always well



dressed, but wandering about the streets might be seen many ragged and miserable objects, with nothing to denote their office except the imposing badge of "*Force à la loi*" over their shoulders.

My first journey in one of the little steam trams which ply between the town and the suburbs was to a place called Bizonton, about four miles along the coast. There was nothing remarkable in the scenery or the straggling buildings on the way, although the large number of washerwomen at Bizonton attracted my attention, and I subsequently returned with a young English-speaking coloured man to act as my interpreter, in case they might have any objection to being photographed. On another occasion, between the town and Bizonton, I found an unexpected ally in the person of a black woman whose father had come from the United States. She had never forgotten the English language and aided me in arranging with the driver of an ox-cart which was passing near her cottage. The town is seen in the distance, on the other side of the water. It was amusing to notice how this friendly woman had cultivated French manners, seeming even to push them to an excess of politeness. On approaching a group of people among whom she had an acquaintance she invariably stopped abruptly and said in a marked tone of voice, "*Messieurs et mesdames,*" adding some appropriate word for the time of day before entering into general conversation. The Haitians, however, did not behave with equal courtesy, generally looking on me in a suspicious and somewhat surly manner while asking her what "*ce blanc*" was doing here. This expression is used towards a white man in Haiti much in the same way that the term "nigger" is used by white people towards negroes in other countries.

Only about one-third of this large Island, which is more than six times the size of Jamaica, belongs to Haiti, the eastern two-thirds forming the Republic of Santo Domingo. The population of Haiti, however, is greater than that of its neighbour. Port-au-Prince lies on the western coast in an indenture so deep that the frontier of Santo Domingo is only about fifty miles distant, and the only Haitian railway, exclusive of the suburban tramways, runs about thirty-three miles in this direction. One afternoon I went in the train with the family of the hotel as far as a station called Mission des Croix, about five miles out of town. There were only a few scattered cottages, besides the church and a refreshment house, but it was rather a favourite resort for the public on a holiday. A few days afterwards I returned here with the waiter of the hotel in order to photograph one or two of the cottages of the peasants, who might not have been so obliging without an interpreter, especially in a country where white strangers are disliked. My companion was an obliging young fellow, coloured but not black, who could speak French fairly well, and he brought a friend with him, so we went about without any apprehension of getting into trouble. When the people understood what we wanted they were quite willing to allow themselves and their houses to be photographed and behaved just as civilly as in most of the other islands.

I had now been in Haiti for the greater part of two weeks without having been many miles from the capital, and it was necessary to make a more lengthened expedition if I wished to become acquainted with



the interior. The direction which offered most facilities was the so-called "Cul-de-sac" Railway which had already brought me as far as Mission des Croix. At the end of this line, about thirty-three miles from town, there is a large lake some twenty-five miles in length, the further end of which lies within the confines of Santo Domingo, so that with the aid of water-carriage there ought not to be much difficulty in seeing something of the neighbouring Republic.

Before making any final preparations I was warned that it would be necessary to obtain permission to travel from the authorities, something, in fact, like the permit of the police on leaving Jamaica. This was a disagreeable surprise, the Haitian Consul in Kingston having already given me a passport, which is generally supposed to suffice for the whole country belonging to the Government in whose name it is issued. Accordingly I went to one of the principal public buildings where, after a few inquiries, I found myself in front of the official whose business it was to attend to such applications. These higher functionaries are, of course, men of some education and can speak fairly good French. I was received, not exactly rudely, but still with a good deal of superiority on the part of the dark man in charge, to whom I made known my desire to travel towards the frontier. Instead of either granting or refusing the application, he referred me to another Government office at some distance. The messenger sent to show me the way was a most objectionable kind of person, who indulged in violent gesticulations nearly all the time to aid his almost unintelligible *patois* in making me understand that he expected to be paid for his services. On arrival at the second office the man in charge listened to what the messenger and myself had to say and then asked me if I could write in French. The question seemed rather wide of the mark, but I expressed my willingness to make the attempt. He now dictated to me a formal request that I should be allowed to travel, which I left with him, and was instructed to call at the first office on the following day. In the meantime the messenger was sent to the hotel to verify my personality and probably to receive such information about me generally as the people of the house were able to supply.

Next day, on my return to the first office, the man in charge began to draw out the desired permit. He said it would cost me several gourdes, which I paid at once, upon which he handed me the paper, and remarked that it was customary to give a "gratification" for things of this kind. I offered him a gourde, which he indignantly refused. Being anxious to put an end to this troublesome business, I then asked if he would be satisfied with two gourdes, and on receiving an affirmative reply, tendered him a note for that amount. He refused to accept it, thereby causing me to be so puzzled by his action that I did not know what to do, especially as he again said that he would be satisfied with two gourdes. Sometimes one arrives at a correct conclusion without any definite line of reasoning, partly perhaps by trifling indications which can hardly be described and the rest by intuition, so I now offered him two notes of one gourde each. This time the money was readily accepted and the only explanation can be as follows: The gratification which he had virtually demanded was an illegal perquisite which he would be obliged to share with his companion in



office who was present. If the money were given in a two-gourde note, one of the officials would have to keep the note until it could be changed, but as neither could trust the other it was necessary that the money should be delivered in two halves. On somewhat imprudently remarking that it was not usual to give gratifications on such occasions, I was cut short by a slight push of the hand against my shoulder and a peremptory "*Allez!*" and I descended the steps of the office in no very friendly frame of mind towards Haitian officials.

Having now overcome the chief difficulty, I thought it would be desirable to obtain a passport for the neighbouring Republic of Santo Domingo, which was to be included in my excursion. The treatment at the office of the Consul for that country was thoroughly dignified and in accordance with those courteous manners which seem inseparable from Spanish-speaking officials. There was a reluctance, however, to draw out the passport for more than one district, and, as it was impossible that I should go very far over the borders, I chose the part which was nearest. The journey as far as the lake was likely to be a very simple matter, so I determined to make an exploratory trip to the end of the railway line and to return to Port-au-Prince before making the longer expedition. If this should seem an excess of precaution it must be remembered that I was travelling under the peculiar conditions of a foreigner whose race was disliked and who, while only being able to make himself partially understood, could understand still less in return. It was not probable that I should be molested, but in all these wild countries the difficulties about obtaining food and shelter are very similar.

I left the station by the afternoon train which arrives towards dusk at the end of the line, where it would be necessary to find some accommodation for the night. The slowness of the train gave abundant opportunities for noticing the character of the country, which had already disappointed me in the vicinity of the capital. In most tropical countries the fertility of the soil depends in great measure on the rainfall, or, if this be insufficient, on the artificial supply of water. When the land was in possession of the French the good irrigation canal made the ground productive, but the canal is now out of repair and the railway did not cross a single watercourse which contained either running or stagnant water, although there were bridges over one or two large creeks which were evidently filled at certain times. There had also been a drought lately, although the overgrowth of that hardy species of acacia (the Mexican mezquite), which will live on soil too arid to support the life of ordinary plants, seemed to indicate that the rainfall in these parts is always insufficient. The train sometimes passed through a cutting of one or two miles in this thorny scrub, which one is accustomed to associate with desolation. In one or two places there were clearings in the bush, where a cluster of huts was situated, and these bare patches, surrounded by acacia, reminded me of the Indian villages in the desert parts of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec in Mexico.

All the land, however, was not so miserable, for we passed a few places where there were sugarcane plantations. The luxuriant foliage of a few scattered coco-nut palms and other fruit-bearing trees aided in giving the landscape the appearance of a habitable country. These



graceful plants, however, were not sufficiently numerous to impart that joyous appearance which is seen in the more favoured tropical districts, and they seemed to be competing at a disadvantage with the thorny acacia. We were, in fact, travelling over an arid plain, towards which the distant mountains were converging, and I now began to realize why this line is called the "Cul-de-sac" Railway.

Presently I entered into conversation with a white man who appeared to be French and was in reality a creole or white native of one of the Islands belonging to that nation. In a country like Haiti a stranger generally feels drawn towards anyone of his own colour, so I anxiously asked this man what the character of the lake country was like, remarking that mountain and lake scenery gave promise of beautiful views such as are found in Switzerland. "*Oh! mon cher,*" replied the creole in French, "the views are much more beautiful than those of the Swiss lakes." The thought of having such a charming field for photography put me into high spirits, although I had to defer the pleasure of beholding it, night having fallen before we arrived at *l'étang*, as Lake Assuei is generally called.

Few passengers had travelled as far as the terminus, and even my new acquaintance had gone into another carriage, so I was rather at a loss to know what to do when the train stopped among some unlit sheds and railway buildings. Stumbling along in the darkness I at last came to an inhabited house, the open door of which, revealing a rough kind of bar-room lit up by a gloomy light, seemed to indicate that accommodation could be found here. On entering I was somewhat surprised to find that this was the home of my creole acquaintance, who made no difficulty about providing me with food and lodging for the night.

While supper was being prepared, we had a friendly drink of some kind of native rum, which I invited one or two black men to share, and in the course of the evening found someone whose fluent Spanish was very suggestive that he came from the neighbouring Republic. This made me all the more anxious to cross the borders so as to be in a country where an intelligible language and not a *patois* was used. The supper, however, was a great disappointment. A peculiar dish which my host assured me was a much-esteemed creole delicacy was so nauseous as to be uneatable, and even some tinned food which he opened was almost equally bad, so that a little stale bread was the staple of my diet. No disparagement is hereby meant to creole food, which I afterwards tried in Martinique and found to be very good, but this man's surroundings resembled himself, and his character will be described by means of his actions. Fortunately in hot countries it is easy to provide a bedroom, which in these rougher parts merely means a room where there is some kind of stretcher or bunk, and when no bed-clothes are provided your boots wrapped up in something soft will serve for a pillow, and your coat may do duty for a blanket.

Next morning there was a good opportunity for verifying the glowing description of the scenery during my walk of two miles along the shore of the lake to a saw-mill, for the purpose of making inquiries about a motor-launch which leaves daily at eight in the morning for the further end of the water. The view, however, was as disappointing



as the supper of the previous night, and I now blamed myself for not knowing intuitively that the lavish praises of the creole must have been, to say the least, a gross exaggeration, as I had already heard that this lake was brackish, and how could vegetation thrive along a shore whose waters were not fresh? It was certainly a surprise to find a huge lake, looking like an inland sea, in a West Indian island, but the panorama was gloomy and desolate. The shores were quite barren, and the rugged mountains which formed a grim barrier at a short distance from the water's edge were covered with a scrubby kind of foliage, without any pretensions to beauty. Hardly any settlements were visible, as life could only exist where the few streams ran into this huge salt reservoir, which was only useful as a means of transit. In some places dead trees were standing in the margin of the water, causing a man to remark, "The water is gaining." This is not surprising considering that the lake appears to have no outlet, in which case the only check on a continual rise in the water's level would be by evaporation, which must be considerable over so large a surface. Even at a distance of three or four miles the surrounding mountains presented a hazy appearance, such as is often the case in the West Indies when the warm weather has set in, the best time for views being the short winter when the air is clear.

Having obtained the necessary information about the motor-launch, I now returned to the railway station to await the departure of the train. My host had provided me with a "nice creole breakfast" as nauseous as the supper on the previous night, and the account had run up to about eight shillings in English money. The food was so bad that it would have been dear at a quarter of the price, but there was no use in grumbling, and in a few hours I was back in Port-au-Prince.

Before describing the longer journey, which lay chiefly in the neighbouring Republic, it will be suitable to make a few remarks about Haiti and its people. Most observers agree that Haiti is a somewhat barbarous country, although the cause has been attributed to very different reasons.

Sir Spenser St. John considers that the present unsatisfactory condition arises from the negroes having been left to themselves and thus relapsing into barbarism. Mr. Hill, the American writer already quoted, makes the following reply to this argument: "The conditions which St. John describes are not those of retrogradation, but merely the survivals of customs which the ancestors of these people brought from Africa." The former theory assumes that the Haitians have relapsed into barbarism instead of adhering to their newly-acquired civilization. The later theory assumes that the Haitians could not relapse because they had never been thoroughly civilized. There is probably some truth in both arguments, for while the negroes in the more settled parts must have been greatly influenced by French civilization, it is probable that in the more remote districts they were far less affected by it. Since Haiti became independent, more than a hundred years ago, the negroes of that country have been able to follow their own inclinations instead of having to conform to the customs of the white man. Under these circumstances their more backward condition may well be due to a slower advance rather than



to a relapse into barbarism, from which, according to the latter theory, they had never completely emerged.

The Republic of Haiti affords unusual opportunities for showing the characteristics of the negro race, not merely from having been so long independent of white control, but because it has also a relatively larger negro population than any other important West Indian island. In the late possessions of Spain the white and coloured population outnumbered the black in most places, while even in the British islands, although those of pure white race are few, there is a large number of people of mixed blood. In Haiti nine-tenths of the inhabitants are said to be black and only one-tenth coloured, while there are practically no whites, with the exception of the few foreign merchants. It would be unfair to suppose that the number of coloured West Indians in the other islands represent the negro race. They can only do so in proportion to their admixture of that blood, which is often slight. Haiti itself will furnish a proof that black and coloured people do not altogether harmonize in their ideas, as Sir Spenser St. John quotes the opinion of "a faithful historian" to the effect that the backward state of the Island has been largely due to dissensions of this kind. If therefore negroes have different aspirations to those of coloured people, it is but natural that the contrast should be more marked in the case of Europeans. To quote the words of a negro, "The black man looks at things from a different point of view." While, however, in his more candid moments he will acknowledge his inferiority by a remark such as, "He has done well for a black man," there is nothing he resents more than any slight, real or supposed, on account of his colour.

This is the chief reason why the Haitian Government and people assume a somewhat hostile and exclusive attitude towards white strangers, being well aware that the consequences of encouraging the latter to settle in the Island would be to place themselves in an inferior position. In this respect their line of reasoning is thoroughly in accordance with that of many white people—they would rather rule in a backward country than be subordinate in a more advanced one; for when a comparison is made between Haiti and the other West Indian islands it will be noticed that although the latter, as a whole, are in a much more advanced state, the chief progress in this respect lies with the white and lighter-coloured people, and not with the negroes, who, as a class, remain at the bottom of the social scale. In a large town like Port-au-Prince the lower-class negro may be at a disadvantage owing to the insanitary nature of his surroundings, but the poorer country people do not seem to be on a lower level of comfort than those in the islands ruled by white Governments. Their cottages are equally good, they own domestic animals and are able to live on the soil of their land, which can hardly be said of some of the inhabitants of the British West Indies.

If, however, there is not much difference between the condition of the Haitian and other West Indian peasants, a new phase presents itself among the educated black people of the capital, in which we come across a class of negroes hardly to be seen elsewhere. Mercantile business is, indeed, of a cosmopolitan nature which can be better transacted by the more versatile brain of the white stranger, although



there are certain callings, such as those of the official and professional classes, which give the advantage to the native in every independent country. Black men may, indeed, attain this status in the islands administered by white Governments, but they are the exceptions. It would be a rare instance for a negro to become a prominent official or a leading professional man, although coloured people often are.

In Haiti the emoluments attached to these offices are not very great, but the greatness of the dignity, aided by a racial resistance to heat, has induced the negro to adopt a ceremonious style of dress which is scrupulously avoided by white people in the tropics. Thus a class of men are seen who go about frequently, if not habitually, dressed in black clothes of formal cut and who evidently consider themselves the aristocracy of the place. Their attire may produce the desired effect upon their less favoured countrymen, although to a stranger it has a serio-comic effect and might induce some such exclamation as "Prodigious!" A negro, indeed, especially one of unusual size, wearing a frock coat, a tall hat, black gloves and patent-leather shoes, is an object of interest, as the guide-books say. There is, however, a certain amount of latitude in this style, so as to admit of a suitable distinction between the dress of the "city fathers" and the *jeunesse dorée*. The former are somewhat unapproachable in their grandeur, which a stranger does not often have the opportunity of criticizing at close quarters. The latter, however, are more frequently seen in such places as restaurants, and, while presenting a decidedly dressy appearance, their attire is less formal. The tall hat may be dispensed with, and the coat, which is generally black, may be shorn of its tails, but other embellishments help to make up for these losses. The exponent of Haitian fashion generally carries a little varnished cane, which he taps against the table while he hums some melody, of which few syllables can be distinguished except a French-sounding *ton*.

This attempt to imitate a Parisian manner is not so strained as it may appear, nor is it merely a survival of French habits after more than a hundred years of independence, as some of the richer Haitians send their sons to France to be educated, and when these young men return they naturally wish to air their acquired accomplishments. On beholding these apparitions one may be excused for wondering where the rarely seen female counterpart is, when even Sir Spenser St. John, after many years' residence, has noticed "the almost total absence of black ladies" in Haitian society. The elaborately dressed men must have female belongings, and one is driven to the conclusion that these do not dress in a corresponding manner, or else that they are kept in seclusion at home. The latter does not correspond to the character of the negro, who is passionately fond of female company.

A stranger cannot help being more favourably impressed by the simple and comparatively friendly manner of the peasantry than by the thick veneer of the upper classes, who, in spite of all their efforts, do not convey the impression of being French, but rather of laborious imitators of that nation.

From the facts mentioned, however, it will appear quite natural that Haitians should resent the idea of their country being occupied



by any foreign Power. The peasants and the lower-class negroes, undoubtedly very poor, do not seem to be worse off than those in the other islands, while the advent of a white Government would at least put an end to the monopoly of civil, military, and professional dignities and would probably leave the educated black man in a very inferior position. Their own Government, nominally republican, behaves in a despotic manner, but the Haitians have the satisfaction of being ruled by themselves, and this pride of independence of the white man is reflected on the face of the poorest negro when he looks at the stranger disdainfully and asks what "*ce blanc*" is doing here.

During so short a visit there was little opportunity for finding out whether human sacrifices are really offered at those weird orgies which have so darkened the name of Haiti, and on asking the British Consul his reply was, "You must not paint them more black than they really are; there has been only one conviction in the last three years." In this case the votaries are said to have been caught in the act, with the body of a girl who had just been bled to death beside them. The Haitian Government does not tolerate such barbarities and the authors of the deed were imprisoned, but after a time they "disappeared." This term sounds rather ominous when applied to a prisoner, although the Consul assured me that it meant that the culprits had been released.

While, however, the Government does not permit human sacrifices, there is no doubt that witchcraft, or "obeahism" as it is called in the British islands, is practised to a great extent without fear of prosecution. The Consul had been much impressed by the skill which these professors of the black art have acquired in the use of poisons. They do not belong to that class of bunglers who kill a person with a fatal dose and thereby set the law in action against themselves. The victim is given the poison in such a subtle manner that he appears to have been afflicted with some lingering disease, and his only chance of recovery is to go to another expert for the purpose of obtaining the counter-poison or antidote, by which alone he can be cured; for it is said that these poisons are unknown to white people and that modern science is therefore unable to treat them. The truth of this last assertion seems rather doubtful, although it is probable that no analysis could be made on the spot for want of a sufficiently good apparatus.

In justice to Haiti, however, it must be remembered that the same tendency to obeah worship and its attendant crimes exists in many of the other West Indian Islands governed by the white race, only it is here kept in firmer check by the law.



## CHAPTER IX.

## IN HAITI AND ON THE BORDERS OF SANTO DOMINGO.

ONE or two days after my return to Port-au-Prince I started on a more lengthened expedition towards the frontier of the neighbouring Republic of Santo Domingo, taking with me, besides the camera, a little handbag and a blanket in which was rolled up a change of washing clothes. It was fortunate that I had the permit to travel, for, at a station more than halfway towards the lake, a black official made me produce it. A Jamaican negro, however, who was in the same carriage, was never asked any questions, and it appears that they are not so particular with black strangers, many of whom have made themselves at home in Haiti. Arriving at the lake soon after dark, I was again obliged to put up at the undesirable house of the creole, in default of other accommodation. He seemed rather surprised that I did not ask for any supper, having brought enough food with me; he professed, however, to be very friendly, and on hearing that I was going to the other end of the lake by the motor launch next morning, informed me that a boat was going there on that very night. From my previous experience of this man I ought to have distrusted everything he said, but I was so anxious to get away that I fell into the trap, and went with him to a neighbouring hut, where he informed its occupant, a coloured man, that I wished to start as soon as possible. All was ready towards midnight, when the boatman, a big boy, and myself, embarked in a fair-sized rowing boat which carried a sail, and although the price demanded for the passage was considerable, about a pound in English money, I did not grudge it in my eagerness to go on.

A night trip over a large lake was certainly a novel experience. The water, a few hundred yards from the shore, was so nearly fresh that I thought at first the term brackish was misapplied. There was, however, a local cause in the stream which runs into the lake at the little settlement near the railway station, for when we were far from land the water had become quite saline. After rowing a short distance we put up the sail, although the wind was so faint that we barely moved through the water. Thus the night passed drearily enough without shelter from a shower which overtook us, or even room to lie down, and towards morning I began to doze where I was sitting. When the day broke I found, by conversing with the boatman, that we were not making for the port at the eastern end of the lake, but for an intermediate settlement on its southern shore, where I should have to change from this boat into a ship in order to complete the voyage. It now looked as if the journey was going



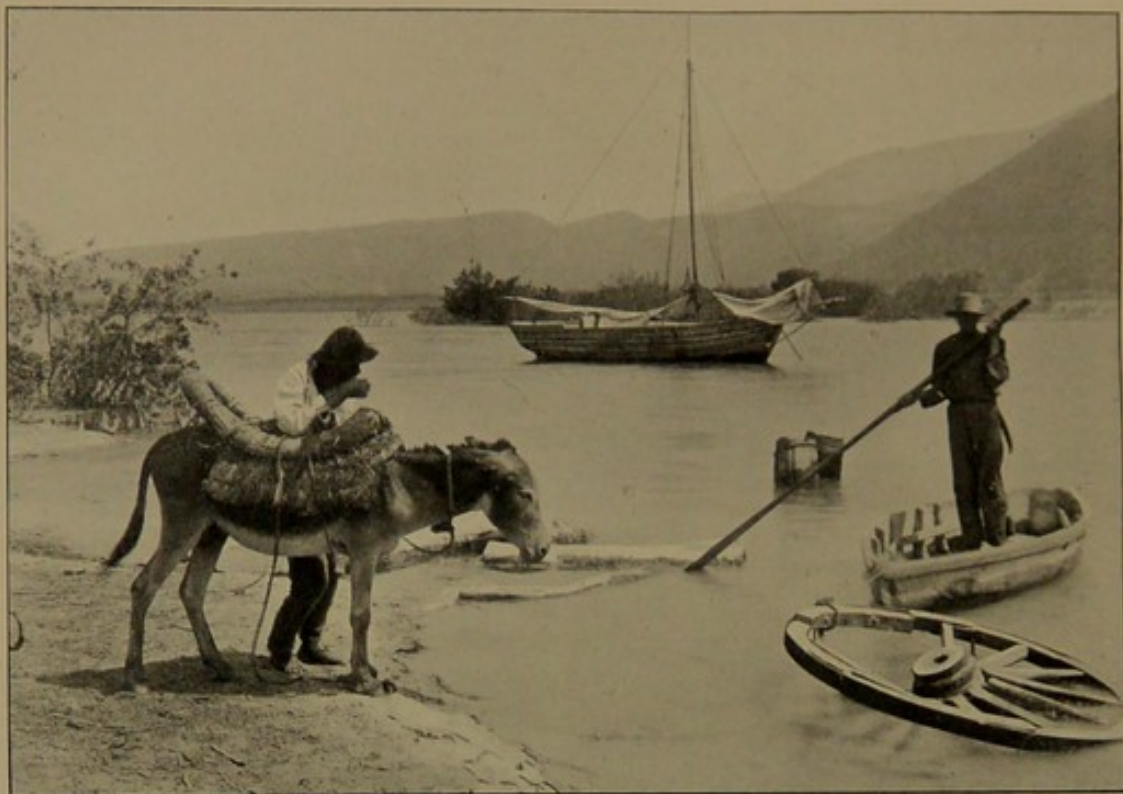


Washerwomen at Bizonton.

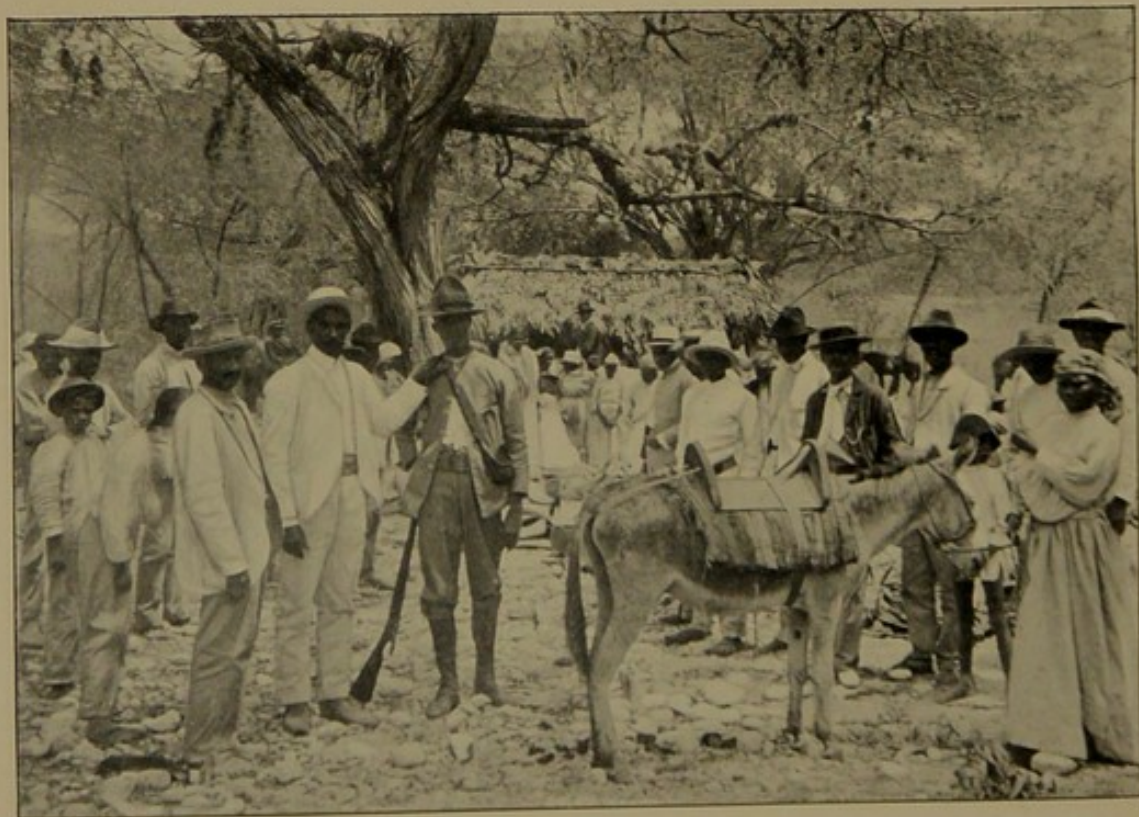


Peasants' Cottages at Mission des Croix, five miles from Port-au-Prince.  
The two central figures are Peasants.





Landing-place at Jimanie, "where the water narrowed into a Muddy Creek."  
The Ship which had brought me from Fonds Parisiens is in the background.



Market-place in a Clearing in the Scrub at Jimanie.  
Customs-House Guard with rifle in the foreground.



to be considerably longer and more troublesome than it ought to have been. It was not, however, the fault of the boatman, who was merely acting under orders. The scenery continued to be of that desolate kind which is evidently the character of the barren shores and rugged mountains surrounding this saline lake. An alligator swimming on the surface of the water kept company with us for a short distance, causing the boatman to remark that those in this lake were harmless, but that in another salt lake further on they were dangerous. He looked, however, just like others of his kind, and was quite large enough to be formidable.

The news of another inland sea, with a fresh-water lake in its vicinity, was almost marvellous. Even a brackish lake twenty-five miles long was wonderful enough, but to hear of another one, whose waters more salt than the sea extended for forty miles, seemed a tale more fitting for some large continent than for a West Indian island. As the morning advanced the boatman and the boy took a frugal breakfast of beans, which they offered to share with me; this food, however, had so often been thrust upon me in Mexico, where it is a favourite dish, that nothing but starvation would make me eat it. We landed early in the afternoon at a little settlement called Fonds Parisiens, of much the same character as the place we had left. Here, also, a fresh-water stream ran into the lake, and with the fresh water came vegetation and even cultivation of the ground. The boatman asked me if I would like something to eat, to which I readily assented, although that uncomfortable feeling which generally ensues on having been up all night prevented me from having a good appetite. He now brought me to what appeared to be a superior kind of cottage and explained my wants, upon which I was asked what kind of food I required. I diffidently suggested rice, eggs and coffee, and, on being told that these could be obtained, professed myself quite satisfied. I now found myself with a new name, for when my afternoon breakfast was prepared, the woman of the house, speaking in better French than is usually the case here, said, "Monsieur Blanc, your breakfast is ready." This was evidently intended for politeness; I was no longer "this white" but "Mr. White." The eggs and rice were well cooked, without any of those repulsive flavourings which often spoil good food, being in fact the best meal I tasted before my return to town. The price charged was high, an equivalent to about half-a-crown in English money, but it was a necessary expense.

I now lounged about the landing-place, waiting for the little tub of a ship to start, and as no signs of departure were visible at nightfall I got into it. We did not leave, however, until late at night, when a good many black passengers came on board. It was, of course, impossible to lie down in a small craft crowded with passengers and cargo, so I dozed as best I could while we glided through the calm waters under a small sail, arriving at Jimanie, the port on the frontier of Santo Domingo, about sunrise on the following morning. Thus, owing to the contrivances of my creole acquaintance, it had taken me some thirty hours to make a journey which might have been done in almost one-tenth of the time in the motor launch. The little I had seen in coasting about the lake was a poor compensation for the discomfort of having been without a sleeping place for two nights,



and I subsequently found that the fare charged in the launch was only two or three shillings in English money. Probably the cunning creole had arranged with the people of the ship to take me the latter part of the journey for a trifling sum, while charging me for a special means of conveyance. Words, or at least printable words, are hardly equal to the occasion.

This so-called port was merely a landing-place at the end of the lake, where the water narrowed into a muddy creek, on the banks of which I subsequently surprised an alligator. With the exception of a shed without walls to protect cargo from rain, there were no buildings within sight and the country had still the same barren and scrubby appearance. On making inquiries about a lodging I was told that there was only one possible place, so I arranged with a boy to show me where it was. We now left the lake, following a track through about a mile and a half of scrub, until we emerged in the open at a white-washed cottage, very similar to those in Haiti. An English-speaking coloured man appeared at the door and most civilly invited me to come inside, where I explained my business, which was only to see something of the country and to take a few photographs. In this place, where I enjoyed the hospitality of the house for three days, the treatment was as good as it had been the reverse on the other side of the lake. My host was in the employment of a company which traded in the hard woods of these parts. Here is an instance of how easily a stranger may be deceived by the appearance of a country. The timber round the lake looked decidedly inferior to the eye, and most of the bushes and plants were those which generally grow in arid places very little superior to deserts, but among them were unattractive-looking trees of considerable value on account of the hardness of their woods.

Three languages were constantly spoken in this house. The man's own language was English, his wife spoke that of her native country, Santo Domingo, which was Spanish; we were, however, so near the Haitian frontier that some of the people who had business here conversed in French, or rather in its *patois*. Thus the continual change of languages was decidedly to my advantage, for instead of only having one-half of the current medium of conversation, I might be now said to have two and a half out of three.

After a short rest I returned to the lake to photograph the landing-place. It will be noticed that the scenery is wild rather than picturesque, and is imposing from its continental vastness, which is all the more wonderful in a West Indian island where the views are generally pretty rather than on a large scale. Hispaniola, however, is second to none of the Antilles in panoramic grandeur; it is here and not in Cuba that the highest mountains and largest lakes are found.

My host accompanied me to a market which was being held not far from his house. We went for a few hundred yards along a track through the scrub of thorny acacia, and presently found ourselves in a large clearing which was fairly well filled with people intent on buying and selling. This market is attended by both French- and Spanish-speaking people on the borders of the two Republics. The French blouse often proclaimed the nationality of the Haitian men.



The Haitian women wore either a kerchief or a palm-leaf hat, and sometimes both, on their heads, while the women of Santo Domingo frequently made an attempt at real Spanish style by drawing over their heads some kind of shawl-like covering in the form of a hood. It was interesting to notice the efforts of these coloured and black people to follow the customs of the European nations from which they had been so many years separated. The influence of my companion gave me a good opportunity for photographing the scene. The man in the khaki uniform is a customs-house guard of Santo Domingo, Jimanie being so near the frontier that the Government was evidently apprehensive that contraband might be introduced from Haiti. One person, indeed, called this official an American guard, although he was evidently a coloured son of the soil, and the following explanation, given me by a person who had resided in Santo Domingo, is probably correct in substance, even if it does not follow the exact official text.

Santo Domingo, like many other countries, had a national debt which was causing trouble between the Government and its creditors. The United States forced a loan on the unwilling people, and, as a security for their investment, took over the administration of the customs of Santo Domingo, thereby obtaining a controlling influence in that country. This state of affairs was naturally causing anxiety to the Haitians as well, who foresaw that their own independence would not long survive that of their neighbour.

There are certain essential differences between the people of Haiti and of Santo Domingo, differences so well marked as to be perceptible to a stranger like myself at a distance of only a few miles from the frontier, and my own impressions were fully confirmed by people who were better acquainted with the Island. The Haitians are proud of being an independent black nation, and in reality there is not much white blood among them. Having no language or civilization of their own, they are obliged to use those of their former masters, the French, but the very fact of calling a white man "*ce blanc*" in a contemptuous way shows that they consider themselves a distinct and dominant race, and that they do not wish to be intruded upon. And if this were not a sufficient proof one has only to notice the disabilities attached to white foreigners with regard to travelling or buying land in the Republic. The people of Santo Domingo, on the contrary, are not and do not wish to be considered a black nation. By an accident of birth there is a good deal of the negro mixed with their Spanish blood, but they do not resent the intrusion of white strangers and behave towards them as people of a kindred race. Their language is spoken in perhaps as pure a state as in other Spanish-American republics, not having degenerated into a dialect like the Haitian *patois*, and they feel drawn towards a stranger who addresses them in their own tongue. This cordiality was exemplified at a cottage which our party subsequently visited, when a woman on hearing me speak in Spanish, called out in welcome, "*Baje, usted paisano*" (Dismount, fellow-countryman).

Lake Enriquillo, the huge sheet of salt water said to be forty miles in length, was hardly two miles from my host's cottage, which thus stood almost halfway between these two inland seas. A boy now conducted me through the flat intervening country, where a stream



of fresh water had encouraged a sparsely-inhabited settlement with a certain amount of agriculture, but when we approached the shore of the salt lake my spirits fell at the desolation of the scene. Passing by some patches of dry scrub, we now crossed over a bare level surface of sun-cracked clay before reaching the sandy margin ribbed like that of the sea, to which a few cockle-shells furthered the resemblance. By its taste the water could not be distinguished from that of the ocean and is said to be even more saline. The distant view was lost in its immensity, but a low island, said to be twenty miles in length, was clearly visible at a distance. A ship was moored near the shore, about two miles further on, showing that this inland sea is used for water-carriage, although for some reason or other no voyages were being then made. Whatever hopes I might have had of obtaining an interesting view were dispelled by the immensity of the flat panorama, in which all the necessary accessories were absent. It wanted some central figure, like that of a scapegoat, to harmonize with the dreary surroundings. Notwithstanding the desolation of this lake district which corresponds to the *despoblado*, or depopulated area, in the middle<sup>1</sup> third of the Island mentioned by Mr. Robert Hill, the locality is very interesting from other reasons. Here we have within a few miles of each other the brackish Lake Assuei, some twenty-five miles in length, the salt Lake Enriquillo, about forty miles in length, and the small fresh-water Lake Limon. Several reasons have been given to account for this saline water, the most probable of which is that advanced by both Mr. Hill and Mr. Fiske, namely, that Lake Enriquillo was once connected with the sea.

In these parts the food is so inferior that most strangers would find it hard to keep themselves in good spirits and condition. Coffee was only taken on getting up, and at the two later meals there was merely a choice between water and rum. A little stale bread was procured for me, but the others were independent of such food, seeming to prefer the beans which were my particular aversion, and the meat, apparently dried goats' flesh, was unusually hard and tasteless. All that the house contained, however, was cheerfully shared with me in true hospitality.

While I was here the manager of the hard-wood company paid us a hurried visit and was very friendly. He was a thorough cosmopolitan—a German, I believe, by descent, a British subject by naturalization, and a resident in Haiti. The company had timber concessions in both Haiti and Santo Domingo, so he was constantly travelling in the vicinity of these large salt lakes, which were so useful for water-carriage. During his visit several of the employees came to speak to him, the language used being French or Spanish, but with my host, who appeared to be the man in charge, he always conversed in English. The manager had travelled a good deal in Europe, and made a remark which shows that outsiders take a broader view of the Continent than most of those who come from its western countries. For example, when I remarked that there

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<sup>1</sup> Although the part here described is only some sixty miles to the east of Port-au-Prince, the long promontory stretching about a hundred and fifty miles to the west of the capital, will throw Lake Enriquillo easily into the middle third of the Island.



seemed to be a difficulty in procuring food in this district, he replied, "Oh, there are parts of Europe where it is just as hard to obtain." As I still remained somewhat incredulous, he added, "When I was bear shooting in the Ural Mountains I often found it very hard to get anything to eat." This was more than likely; we are apt, however, to forget the Ural Mountains in our mental pictures of European civilization.

My host now asked me if I would like to accompany him and some of the other employees who were going to take a long ride further eastward for the purpose of making the preliminary survey of a track from the back country to the shore of Lake Enriquillo, so that the timber might be carried by water. This was too good a chance to refuse, so a mule was hired for me at the moderate cost of about four shillings in English money.

We started, some four or five of us, early in the morning, my companions being all more or less coloured people, although not black. Our mounts, which were good pacers, must have travelled from twelve to fifteen miles before we made a halt at a straggling settlement near Lake Limon, the fresh-water lake already mentioned. The scattered huts lay under the shelter of high trees, thus presenting the unusual appearance of a village in a forest. We remained a short time at one of these cottages, where my companions, evidently in want of a guide, were making inquiries about the country between here and the salt lake for the purpose of making the track. The people, who were now all Spanish-speaking, offered us rum, a sign of hospitality in all parts of the world.

I was anxious, however, to see Lake Limon, which was only a few hundred yards from the village, so they brought me close to the water's edge. The flat ground between the village and the lake was dotted with trees which grew tall and straight, as if they appreciated the rare event of an abundance of fresh water, while the thorny bushes had either disappeared or must at any rate have become infrequent, for they were not noticeable. The lake was comparatively small, perhaps two or three miles in length, with a margin of vegetation which formed a striking contrast to the dismal aspect of the larger sheets of water. On the further side was a mountain and there were several smaller elevations at no great distance, where a view might have been taken, but I could not delay my companions, who had a long day's ride in front of them.

We now continued our journey for a short distance along the track, and then turned to the left towards the salt lake. The scrub now closed in around us, and the guide, whom we had obtained at the village, went to the front on foot, blazing the trees as he went along, so that the line might be subsequently followed. To a person unacquainted with the value of the trees the country seemed as worthless as could be imagined. We were threading our way between some low barren hills with the object of making the ascents as slight as possible. No grass grew on the ground, and the stunted trees which imperfectly shaded us from the burning sun seemed to vie with the smaller plants in producing thorns which could not always be avoided by swaying in the saddle, for in spite of all our precautions our hats were occasionally taken off our heads. This



was the home of the thorny acacia, the prickly pear, and of that long, straight species of cactus called in Mexico the *organo*, from its supposed resemblance to the pipe of an organ, all of which are armed with spikes capable of tearing flesh or clothing.

Our guide took particular notice of whatever I said or did. My host informed me that this man persisted in thinking that I was the leader of the expedition, perhaps on account of my interest in the proceedings, or because I was the only white man present. He alluded to me so frequently as "*El blanco*" (the white), which was not up to the level of Spanish politeness, that at last our real chief said, "We do not wish you to speak of him thus, he is Don Luis."

We made very slow progress through a few miles of this scrub, coming out at last on a road, upon which the guide was dismissed, and we went on at a faster pace towards Lake Enriquillo. During one of our halts on a flat between some patches of dry-looking scrub, my mule made a sudden pull on the bridle to eat some plant which was growing on the arid and bare ground. The juicy green leaf seemed so familiar that I proved my suspicions by breaking off and chewing a piece of salt-bush. Some lean cattle were wandering about probably in search of edible plants which grew among the scrub, otherwise in the absence of grass these animals could not have lived. Presently we came upon the shore of the lake, which here also presented the same desolate appearance, and another halt was now made to look out for a suitable "port" for the ship, in the event of the timber being carted to this spot. We had also become very thirsty, not having seen a drop of fresh water since leaving Lake Limon, and eventually we found a few filthy puddles which the cattle had been using, but I did not venture to drink from them. Owing to the very circuitous way in which we had travelled from Lake Limon, and the slow progress made through the scrub, it would be impossible to say exactly how far apart these two lakes are; it might be anywhere between five and ten miles.

We now commenced the homeward journey, cantering for several miles along the level track near the dismal shore of Lake Enriquillo, until at last our road diverged to the left, when we went even faster, the afternoon now being far advanced. On arriving within a few miles of home, where the country became more fertile, we halted at a good stream of running water to enjoy the luxury of a drink. The last few miles passed very slowly, owing to the visits which my companions made at the straggling cottages of their neighbours. These people were certainly very friendly, offering us rum, which seemed to be their only luxury, and it was here that a woman called me "fellow-countryman" on hearing me speak Spanish. The day, however, had been such a long one that it was a relief to return to the house just before dark. We must have travelled about forty miles.

It was now necessary to decide whether I should go further into the interior of Santo Domingo or return to Port-au-Prince. I was told that the whole country along the borders of the salt lake was of the same description, and that the first fertile settlement was about forty miles distant. This was rather too much for my time and money, as it would not be worth riding such a distance unless I were



prepared to spend at least several more days in this part. The motor launch was going to return to the sawmill on that very night, so, saying good-bye to the kindly people, who would only accept a trifle for their hospitality, I walked to the port at Jimanie soon after dark to take my passage.

How different and comfortable was the direct and speedy return as compared with my former journey! Presumably Lake Assuei must be rough sometimes, but perhaps the mountains which bound its shores in so many places protect its waters to a great extent. The launch glided over the tranquil surface, arriving at the saw-mill in about three hours, the fare costing hardly as many shillings. Besides myself there were a few passengers, one of whom was a white man who was also going to the railway station to catch the morning train for Port-au-Prince. I was very glad of his company, as we had two miles to walk at this late hour, and it would have been quite possible to lose one's way among the tracks which diverged in the timbered country at some distance from the lake. He was a genial companion, a Frenchman who had been employed at some neighbouring place, probably by the very same company with whose employees I had been staying, and he was therefore well acquainted with the district. He laughed when I told him how the creole had treated me, and said that this man's character was well known, relating how he had once been victimized himself, although to a less extent.

When we arrived at the railway I found myself again obliged to get a room at this undesirable house, but my companion brought me to a neighbouring hut where I obtained some good coffee and bread from a black woman at a trifling cost. There was no use in upbraiding the creole for his mean conduct, so when morning came I quietly paid for my night's lodging and entered the train with the Frenchman. A tall black man who took our tickets in the carriage had a long conversation with my companion, who told me afterwards that this railway official was a general in the Haitian army, where he had attained that rank after only eight years' service. To this information the Frenchman added the following caustic remark, "When I was serving my three years in the French army I did not rise above the grade of *sous-officier*, but I bet I know more about the business than he does." According to Sir Spenser St. John the salary of Haitian officers is very low, ranging between one hundred and forty pounds for a general of division and twelve pounds for a captain, but there have been several revolutions since that time, so perhaps the army may have "struck" for higher pay. If the number of its generals appears to be redundant it must be remembered that a grateful but impecunious republican Government has a difficulty in otherwise recompensing its faithful adherents. Their poverty precludes a substantial grant of money, their polity is opposed to hereditary titles, so the bestowal of high rank supposed to have been won by professional merit is the only reward at their disposal.

We arrived at Port-au-Prince about the middle of the day on Saturday, thus the whole expedition had only lasted a short week, for I had left on Monday. During the whole of this time I had hardly tasted a good meal, and the food at the hotel now seemed quite



luxurious. My trip to a Spanish-speaking country had made me more liable to mix some words of that language with my French, noticing which an educated Haitian remarked, "You speak Spanish, do you not?" And on being told that his surmise was correct he added, "Ah, but you do not belong to the neighbouring Republic, you must be a white Spaniard from Spain."

About this time a young black man from Demerara came to the hotel. He had just arrived in the Island and was on his way to a German sugarcane plantation in the north of Haiti, where he had contracted to remain for three years at a salary of one hundred pounds per annum, besides his board and lodging, in return for his services as a vacuum-pan expert. Here was another proof that commercial training is more useful than professional in the more remote parts of the world. Many a time during my wanderings I would have been glad of such a chance if I had the necessary knowledge. We were the only two English-speaking people in the house, and thus became friendly.

A black fiddler, who had lately begun to frequent the bar-room of the hotel in the evening, now invited the Demeraran and myself to his abode near the sea front. It was a low quarter which was not advisable to visit at night, but as we went by invitation there did not seem to be much risk. In this locality there were several dancing-rooms in rum shops, where a few somewhat draggled-looking couples might be seen jumping about in some extraordinary dance, while a black policeman in military-looking uniform was always on duty to preserve order. The fiddler, however, had a little drinking shop of his own, which did not appear to be of sufficient importance to necessitate a police guard. A few choice dancers now appeared, whom the visitors were, of course, expected to provide with drink, and the fiddler struck up a lively tune to which the feet of these people responded. In most of the Islands the black natives are very good performers of the ordinary European dances, although they have a few peculiar to themselves, but here the steps were a series of antics to which the term "nigger dances" may be appropriately applied. We soon became tired of the performance and wished to return to the hotel quietly; this, however, was too good an opportunity for simulating a bacchanal revel for the company to lose. Accordingly, to our great annoyance, dancers and spectators accompanied us in a tumultuous throng towards the hotel, singing and twanging musical instruments as they went along. I thought we should have got into difficulties with the night sentries, but some explanation was made, and on arriving at the hotel we were quickly admitted through a side door, well pleased to have got rid of our noisy companions.

A few days after this event the Demeraran asked me if he was correct in thinking that the people of the hotel were going to leave soon. I now felt in rather a false position, the lady of the house having told me in confidence about their intended departure, so when she informed me that they were going on the very next day I asked to be allowed to tell my new acquaintance. On the day in question I had arranged to be outside the town; when, therefore, I told the Demeraran that his suspicions were correct I suggested that he might



do a good turn for himself and me by remaining in the hotel when the family left, as a kind of safeguard against anyone interfering with our belongings. The news made him very anxious about his luggage, and he did not make any decided reply.

That night the fiddler came to the hotel and played with more animation than usual. Some of the family were on the ground floor with the visitors listening to the music, while I was up in my room arranging some photographic apparatus. Between the flourishes of the fiddle I could distinctly hear sounds which are generally associated with the packing up of boxes in some adjoining room, and it really seemed as if the music was being utilized to conceal the preparations for departure. It was, however, no affair of mine, as I had been quite fairly treated.

Before going out in the morning I said good-bye to the family and on my return a little before dusk the hotel presented an extraordinary appearance. The late occupiers had left the front of the building closed, but several people had entered the yard by the side door for the purpose of gaining admission through the back premises, apparently with the object of looting. I hurriedly entered my room, considering myself lucky that only a few old clothes had been stolen. My trunk and its contents had not been touched, neither had the larger pieces of house furniture, such as tables and chairs, been removed. This was probably owing to the vicinity of the police station next door, where two men were always on duty. No large object, therefore, could be removed secretly, but only what could be concealed under the clothing. If, however, the would-be looters had been expert they might have broken open my trunk and have gone off with its contents.

Towards nightfall all these people left the house, but there was no prospect of my being able to look for another lodging until the next morning, as my photographic things were all in an outhouse and I could not pack up in the darkness. So I sat down on a box in the back veranda, in the expectation of passing a miserable evening without food or light. About an hour afterwards the waiter of the hotel looked in, probably to see if I had returned, and inquired if I were not going out to have some dinner. I could not, however, run any further risks of having my things stolen and asked him to bring me a few necessities, such as bread and coffee for supper, a candle, matches, and some cigarettes. He returned presently with all these except the coffee, and before leaving showed me how to bar the side door, so as to prevent people from entering during the night. I now took my frugal supper of bread and water comfortably by the light of the candle, before developing some plates which I had exposed during the day.

At dawn I was aroused by the violent knockings of the unwelcome intruders, who had succeeded in opening the side-door before I could reach it. The premises were again invaded, but it was no affair of mine, so I went to bed again. In less than an hour, however, voices were heard in the adjoining sitting-room, and, peeping out, I saw several well-dressed black men who had evidently come on business. I had hardly time to dress before one of them looked into my room, when I hastened to explain that I had only returned just before dark



and was going to leave as soon as possible. They behaved very civilly, having merely come to make an inventory of the furniture.

The story connected with the mysterious departure of the late occupants of the hotel is as follows: It was said that they had been swindled by the Haitian from whom they had obtained the house and that they had tried to recoup themselves by running up accounts, to avoid the payment of which they had unexpectedly gone away. Suspicion seems to have arisen before the departure of the steamer, as a warrant was obtained for their arrest. The captain of the steamer, however, was one of the old-fashioned sort who was more inclined to protect his passengers than to deliver them to the authorities, and, on the pretext of some flaw in the document, he refused to give them up. And probably no foreign Government would consent to the extradition of a refugee from Haiti. As this account may not be in strict accordance with the real facts all details have been omitted, so as in no way to identify people who had acted quite fairly towards me.

I now removed to another hotel which I had selected previously as a suitable place in case it were necessary to change my quarters. There was, at any rate, no mystery attached to this house, which was called the Hôtel Central. The person in charge of it was an English-speaking coloured woman from the Danish Island of St. Thomas. At this hotel it was usual to provide lodging only and not food. The manageress, however, said that she would provide me with meals, if desired, but as there was a restaurant very near I was quite willing to go there for the last few days before my departure.

Within a few minutes of my taking possession of my bedroom I heard the most dismal groans from the next compartment. The voice gave such an impression of acute suffering that I thought my neighbour must be a dentist or a person who was performing some operation without the use of anæsthetics. In any case it would be impossible to endure such sounds, and when I was given another room the manageress informed me that the groans came from a dying person, who had lately come from the country and had to be received in the hotel because there was no public hospital. A town of about seventy thousand inhabitants without a public hospital! This testified against the Government almost more than anything else. There was, however, a private hospital, supported by the French and German residents for people of their own nationalities.

The restaurant which had been recommended was not bad of its kind, and my first few visits to it passed without any extraordinary incident. One morning, however, after the usual late breakfast, I had asked for a cup of coffee. At one of the small tables there was seated a well-dressed black man who might be considered an intermediate between a "city father" and one of the *jeunesse dorée*, as he had the long-tailed black coat of the former and the jaunty little varnished cane of the latter. When the coffee was put before me, this person jumped up in an excited manner and addressed the coloured restaurant proprietor thus, emphasizing his remarks with violent taps of his cane against the table, "Ah! Monsieur Rivière—ah! *mon cher*, what are you doing? Here is *ce blanc* having coffee and we are not having any. Ah! *mon cher*, you must take better care of the boarders than this!" The good French of the speaker showed that he was a well-educated



man. Probably coffee was not included in the contract and the offended person would never have expected any, only for the unseemly sight of a white man enjoying a luxury which the black aristocrats of Haiti were not sharing. No attempt, however, was made to molest me, and he became pacified when he was brought some coffee.

A few days before my departure I heard accidentally that if a stranger had not provided himself with a passport or permit for leaving the Island, he might be subjected to considerable annoyance with the object of making him pay heavily rather than be detained at the last minute. I had such a vivid recollection of my previous difficulties in obtaining permission to travel that I went at once to the British Consulate for advice. The Consul advised me to allow the business to be done through his office, saying that the permission could thus be obtained with less trouble and expense. Accordingly in one or two days' time an educated English-speaking black man from the Consulate brought me the necessary paper, which it was preferable to pay for thus, rather than to be bullied into giving "gratifications" to Haitian officials. He was a very good fellow, scrupulous to be true to his position in the British Consulate, without altogether "giving away" the people of his own race. "I must say," he remarked, "that these people are barbarous although they are of my own colour, but if you have any business in Haiti, don't be afraid, they won't hurt you."

It was a curious coincidence that I should have been obliged to obtain a permit from the Jamaican police to go to Haiti and a permit from the Haitian Government to go to Jamaica; the reasons, however, for these extraordinary restrictions to visiting neighbouring islands at peace with each other were probably quite different. The Jamaican Government wished to prevent their negroes from going to Haiti, and, as they would not overtly make special regulations for such people, white strangers were included. In the case of the Haitian Government it was "blackmail" pure and simple, although the permit was drawn up in the grandiloquent style of a passport, so as to make it appear that a kindly office had been done in entreating friendly Powers to aid the bearer of it. It seems rather comical that a British subject should be obliged to provide himself with a passport for a country under British rule. The payment, however, was a serious matter, and it might interest the reader to see a copy of the form which in all cost me about ten shillings.

"Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité.

République d'Haïti.

Passeport.

Nous soussigné . . . Secrétaire d'Etat de l'Intérieur  
et de la Police Générale, etc.

Prions les autorités civiles et militaires des Etats amis  
de la République de laisser passer librement le sieur . . .  
(Anglais) se rendant à Kingston (Jamaïque).

Et de lui prêter aide, secours et protection en cas de  
besoin.

Fait à Port-au-Prince le 12 Avril 1907 an 104<sup>ème</sup> de  
l'Indépendance.

I now went to the office of the Hamburg-America Line to buy my ticket for Kingston, intending to take a deck passage as before,



but was somewhat astounded at being told by the clerk that I could not be taken on board without first producing eight pounds, irrespective of the price of the ticket. This was, of course, another Jamaican restriction to prevent the entrance of necessitous people, chiefly negroes, among whom I had again been included. It may be remembered that I had only brought twenty pounds with me, and the four or five which still remained were insufficient to satisfy this unexpected requirement. The difficulty was rather a serious one in a country where I was quite unknown. It would have been very repugnant to approach the British Consul on a subject which might have been taken to refer to want of means, and the only alternative seemed to be to sell some of my effects at a heavy loss in order to make up the deficiency in the sum required. A precaution, however, which I had taken for a totally different reason saved me from this dilemma. On the chance of getting into trouble, and being obliged to prove my identity in this little-known Island, I had brought the statement of my account in the Savings Bank of Jamaica, in which the greater part of my earnings during the last year were placed to my credit; so I said to the clerk that I could prove that I had money by giving him my banking account, which he accepted as an equivalent, and told me that the book would be returned on my arrival at Kingston. All these impediments to leaving Haiti made me anxious to embark before some new difficulty sprang up.

I now made a last visit to the British Consulate; this time, however, not on my own account. It was to find out whether through this means a coloured girl, a native of one of the British islands, could be sent to her home. She was a most deserving one, having been brought to Haiti as a servant, and abandoned through no fault of her own. The Consul assured me that he had instructions not to afford any monetary assistance in such cases, and said that there were in Haiti from one to two hundred British subjects who wished to leave the Island, but were unable to do so from want of means. They might, indeed, be able to pay their deck passage, but would never be likely to save the sum of money which they would be required to produce. This seems a sordid economy on the part of a great nation. It may be right that those who have lost their money in a foreign country should suffer for their imprudence, or that in some respects negroes should receive different treatment to white people; the law of humanity, however, is the same for all, and a young person abandoned abroad ought to be sent home at Government expense.

My month's experience in this strange country had been most interesting. The desolate region of the salt lakes was not, of course, a fair sample of the agricultural capabilities of the Island, parts of which are said to be very fertile, but the vastness of the scenery presented the West Indies in the new aspect of some wilder part of a great continent. The condition of the people was equally instructive, the somewhat *farouche* manner adopted towards a white man as a national enemy being in some respects less galling than the insolent familiarity occasionally displayed by negroes in the English-speaking islands. By keeping a strict control over one's temper, it was quite possible to travel unmolested in a country whose inhabitants were



fairly summed up in the words of the black assistant in the British Consulate, "The people are barbarous, but they won't hurt you."

After buying my ticket for Kingston, there were still two or three pounds left out of the twenty which I had brought with me; and where in the better known islands could I have obtained such good value for my time and money? With these reflections I took my lowly place as a deck passenger in the contented frame of mind of one who has come out of a successful adventure.



## CHAPTER X.

## FROM HAITI TO BARBADOS.

THE only certainty in a deck passage is discomfort, although that of the return voyage was of a different kind to that on the former occasion. The weather had then been very rough, but in return I had only been one night on board. This time, however, the voyage was protracted to three nights, one of which was needlessly inflicted upon passengers by obliging them to embark on the night before departure, and the other by a long delay at a Haitian port near the end of that long peninsula which stretches about halfway between Port-au-Prince and Jamaica. Being a deck passenger I was expected to provide myself with food, which ran short owing to the unexpected length of the journey, so that, in spite of the fine passage, I reached Kingston in a rather depressed condition.

On arrival in the harbour we were boarded by the health officer, with whom I now had a most undesirable experience which had never occurred in my deck passages in South America, where such passengers, whatever hardships they may have to endure on the voyage, are at least allowed to land without being asked any questions. In some of the British West Indian Islands, however, the Governments are so afraid of receiving necessitous people that the unfortunate "decker" is subjected to a cross-examination with a view to finding out whether his means are sufficiently good to make him eligible for admittance. I appeared to be the only deck passenger, and as the solvency of such people is considered doubtful, the official, in discharge of his duty, approached me for the purpose of making the usual inquiries, while the German officers of the steamer, who saw that this was an unusual and interesting case, stood around to listen. "What do you propose to do in Jamaica?" was the first question. I hardly knew what to answer, as I did not propose to do anything except to leave shortly, and a person supposed to be without means might not be believed if he said he was going away soon. "What were you doing when you were in Jamaica before?" was the next question. Here I felt on surer ground and replied that I had been assisting in the hospital at the time of the earthquake, adding that I was not without means, as my banking book would prove. In justice to my interrogator it must be said that, when he found he was putting a medical man through these facings, he examined me no more, and the disappointed German officers went away.

After recovering from the effects of the voyage I visited the hospital to have a talk with the doctors about my adventures in Haiti. Among



them was a stranger, apparently so interested in the conversation that someone remarked, "This is a reporter and he is taking down what you are saying." The person in question was anxious to have further information, which I supplied to the best of my ability. It was a somewhat unwelcome surprise afterwards to see a long article in the newspaper in which my name was mentioned as the source from which this information about Haiti had been obtained, causing the Consul for that country to take me to task about a remark which I had made in reply to the reporter's inquiry as to my opinion about the Government. I had replied that it must be considered corrupt because "gratifications" were expected in the public offices. The Consul maintained that only the officials were corrupt and that the term was unjustly applied to the Government. He was a very good fellow who was only defending the character of his country, so I willingly allowed that the acts of officials ought not to be taken as an equivalent for those of the Government, although when high officials act corruptly in such a barefaced manner the distinction becomes rather fine and is liable to be overlooked.

Everything in Jamaica now seemed rather tame after Haiti, and this made me all the more inclined to hasten my departure for Barbados on the way to Europe. If my knowledge of these parts had been as good then as it is now, I would never have travelled by the well-known route of Colon and the South American ports, a roundabout sea journey which does not offer many opportunities for going on shore. Haiti is already on the way to the chain of the Lesser Antilles, which I might have reached at or near St. Thomas and followed southwards, thus seeing a number of islands and shortening the voyage at the same time. The foreign steamers, however, which take this course are less known to the British public, and although I had now been about a year and a half in the West Indies I had not travelled much in them.

There is another reason why people of moderate means find the foreign lines of European steamers more convenient than the British. No one who has made many voyages in the West Indies can be unaware that there is a certain stigma attached to the second-class passenger, no matter how expensive the line may be; whereas a passenger in the first class of a cheaper line, paying almost the same fare, does not, so to say, lose caste, and is neither slighted on board ship nor made the object of adverse legislation on land.

Some of the foreign lines, notably the Danish, have taken advantage of this fact by carrying only one class, in name first, in price hardly exceeding that of the second, and are well patronized by British subjects in order to avoid the above-mentioned discomforts. Many of these are of the same nature, caused by allowing the second-class deck to be occupied by first or third-class passengers. It is a positive breach of contract, as well as an act of discourtesy, to allow another class to occupy the space which has been set apart for your own. Thus, second-class passengers are often herded up on one side of their own deck in order that those in the first may play games on the other side instead of in their own quarters.

On this voyage we were not much troubled by first-class passengers. This, however, was from no effort on the part of the management



to reserve our part of the ship to ourselves, but rather from the principle of one evil balancing another, for in passages between the West Indian Islands there are often a large number of black people who generally travel as third-class or deck passengers. A small number of these, presumed in the third class, were allowed to frequent our deck, and this had the effect of keeping first-class passengers away. The negro is not bashful by nature. On the contrary, he makes himself very much at home, and when allowed to share second-class accommodation with first-class passengers, he would be quite capable of sitting close to the latter and of taking an undesirable interest in their proceedings, instead of keeping out of their way as a self-respecting second-class passenger would do. If a company openly slights its passengers, the servants are naturally disposed to do the same. When, therefore, some one complained about the food to a steward, the latter replied, "I don't wish to be personal, but you second-class passengers are a set of upstarts—you are too poor to travel in the first class, and are too proud to travel in the third."

The short stoppage of little more than a day at Colon gives practically no time for seeing the wonders of the canal. It is, however, possible to catch a train for the other side of the isthmus, and to return before the steamer leaves. Colon itself is a modern township of wooden houses, presenting a great contrast to Panama, which still shows marked signs of its Spanish origin. The dual Government of the Republic of Panama and of the American Canal Zone is an extraordinary feature in this place, causing a stranger to become rather uncertain about the ownership of a country which has the offices of two different Governments in such close proximity.

This region has been the hunting ground of the West Indian negro in search of money. When the canal work began, he represented the nearest labour, and eagerly availed himself of an opportunity for earning far higher wages than he could hope to obtain in his native island. Hardly any of them, however, wish to settle in the isthmus, and the more prudent have sent their savings home, where many a house has been repaired or built with money earned at Panama. There is, indeed, little inducement to linger in a place where everything is charged at a famine price, so that directly a man ceases to work he counts the hours until he can return with his hard-earned money to a place where it will go much further. The original Indians, here as elsewhere, have retired before civilization, and are hardly ever seen. Most of the negro workers have come from the English-speaking islands; thus, between them and the Americans, the descendants of the Spaniards are finding that their language and customs are being gradually superseded. In this transition stage some of the local names are decidedly curious, as in the street called "Calle Bottle Alley."

The completion of the Panama Canal involves the question of a fresh field of labour, for many negroes who may not have saved enough to start in business on their own account are not likely to be content with the low rate of wages at home. Some of these men, accustomed to the mild rule in the British islands, where a negro sometimes avails himself of legal equality as a cloak for impudence, have here come into sharp collision with American



customs, and a few have been roughly treated or even killed in consequence. In one of these cases, reported at length in the Barbados newspaper, the murderer is reported as having said in defence, "Don't be hard on me, boys, I've only killed a nigger." The verdict was equally suggestive, "not guilty," with a rider to the effect that *the accused should be deported as an undesirable citizen*. The verdict and its rider are contradictory, for if the accused was not guilty why should he be deported? The meaning, however, is plain. Thus, although the American employer and the British negro have been willing to exchange their capital and labour under the pressure of business, the want of cordiality between them was forcibly expressed by an American in the remark that he would rather be in—a place of ill repute for heat—than in the local prison where the guards were negroes, "and when they get an American they don't forget it."

The effects of the opening of the Panama Canal can as yet only be surmised, although there is no doubt that it will give an enormous impetus to the United States, politically as well as commercially, and those who have read the former book, to which this is a sequel, may remember that it was here foreseen that abuses were likely to take place from the exclusive ownership of a world's waterway. British interests seem to be now waking up to this fact and to be contrasting their present subservient condition with their former status under the Bulwer-Clayton treaty, by which, in contemplation of an international canal, both England and the United States abnegated an exclusive control. From their proximity, the West Indies are especially implicated in a change of conditions which will enhance the value of those islands lying in the direct course of the steamers to or from the canal, and will entitle their interests to be treated with consideration.

On arriving at Colon we were further away from Barbados than when we left Jamaica, but our course now lay in a comparatively straight direction along the coast of South America. There are, however, seldom opportunities for visiting any maritime place of interest unless the steamer calls at Cartagena, which is a picturesque old-fashioned town built in the regular Spanish style. At a neighbouring port on the coast of Colombia one of our passengers landed on his way a few hundred miles up the Magdalena River, where he had an interest in a gold mine. In this country the Government is so inquisitive about those whom it admits that this person, himself an American, was now obliged to answer many of the questions which his own Government is so fond of asking strangers. Being a second-class passenger, the Company treated him with scant ceremony by making him answer the obligatory questions at meal time, which of course attracted the attention of the other passengers at the table, so that when at last he was asked his religion, he replied somewhat curtly, "Not much," to the bewilderment of the steward, who hardly knew how to schedule such information.

On reaching the coast of Venezuela several passengers went on shore in order to tranship for the neighbouring Island of Curaçao. Among these were some black people who spoke the extraordinary dialect which goes by the name of Papiamento. This may be described as "nigger Spanish," and bears much the same relation



to the pure language that the Haitian *patois* does to French. There is hardly any other place in America where the Spanish language has been thus mutilated, the reason being probably the following. In the Spanish-American Republics, although there may be much blood that is not Spanish among the inhabitants of the country, the Government, at least, is conducted on a Spanish basis, which thus keeps the language fairly pure. The Government of Curaçao, however, is Dutch, therefore this restraining influence does not exist, and as all the associations of the neighbouring mainland are Spanish, the negroes make no attempt to speak Dutch, but break out into an uncontrolled dialect.

We now arrived at Trinidad, which lies within sight of the Venezuelan coast, and is the second largest and probably the most interesting of all the British West Indian islands. During the rule of the notorious President Castro it was a favourite centre for disaffected Venezuelans to meet for the purpose of organizing revolutions against his Government, and munitions of war have often been smuggled out of its capital, Port-of-Spain.

Trinidad has lately been a good deal before the West Indian public with reference to the so-called Quarantine Convention. In order to facilitate trade, many of the British islands had agreed that, if any infectious disease were to break out among the contracting parties, a quarantine of observation only should be demanded from those coming from an infected place. Thus passengers arriving in apparently good health, instead of being shut up for a period in the quarantine station, were allowed to go about where they pleased, subject to the condition of presenting themselves daily for examination until the possibility of infection had passed. This regulation was, of course, very convenient for commerce, although hardly as secure a precaution as seclusion. If, indeed, the contracting parties had stood on equal terms, this convention would have represented all fairly by maintaining the ratio between the interests of health and commerce. There is, however, a marked difference in the conditions affecting Trinidad, the principal of these being its vicinity to the mainland. Thus people coming from insanitary places in Venezuela are more likely to disembark in Trinidad than anywhere else. As, however, Trinidad reaps most of the benefits of the continental trade, its inhabitants are prone to wish for less stringent quarantine regulations than are agreeable to the more distant islands, which have sometimes become affected through Trinidad with diseases introduced from the mainland, without receiving a corresponding commercial equivalent.

On landing in Port-of-Spain, one is impressed with the commercial aspect of this town of about seventy thousand inhabitants, which in size and prosperity excels the capital of any other British West Indian island. The buildings, however, while including many handsome stone structures, cannot as a whole compare with the solid Spanish architecture so well displayed in Havana. Next to the general animation of the scene, what strikes a stranger most is the number of East Indians in the streets, some of whom have not discarded their native dress, and thus impart a decided oriental aspect to the surroundings. Among them are smart boys, who in perfect English



offer their services, contrasting strongly with the negroes who do all the street work in the other islands. Trinidad, however, will be described afterwards, and we must continue our journey to Barbados, which is only about two hundred miles distant, and can be reached in less than a day, even by a slow line of steamers.

At the time of my first visit to Barbados no regulations had been made against second-class passengers, but on a subsequent voyage from England I was subjected to a series of interrogations, the utility of which the reader may be left to judge. Before leaving the steamer a printed form was presented, in which, among other questions, were the following—whether I could read and write, what my object was in visiting Barbados, and whether I had ten pounds in cash. Treatment like this is, to say the least, enough to surprise a British subject travelling in British dominions.

We cannot prevent foreign nations from acting thus, although in these cases our own Government ought to reciprocate. It may, indeed, be expedient that third-class or deck passengers, who are presumed poor, should satisfy the authorities that they are not going to be a burden to the country, but it will be hard to find a valid reason for inflicting these indignities on second-class passengers who are paying approximately the price of a first-class passage in a cheaper line and who are evidently neither uneducated nor without means. The practical part of the question about money was literally carried out; my luggage had been passed through the customs-house and I was already at the door of the building when another official detained me for the purpose of inspecting my cash, and I was obliged to unpack a second time to satisfy the unexpected demand.

A few months afterwards I again visited Trinidad, leaving however most of my effects in Barbados, which had become a kind of headquarters. On the return journey, recollecting that the same questions might be asked, I determined to refuse to answer them on the grounds that my property had remained in the Island and therefore my stay in it might legally be considered continuous. When we were nearing the shore of Barbados a steward came round with the expected schedule, but this time I was prepared.

"Can you read and write?" he inquired.

"That is a question I shall not answer," was my reply.

"Well, of course, you can read and write," and he obligingly certified to that effect.

"What is your object in coming to Barbados?"

"That is another impertinent question I shall not answer." The steward looked at me with marked approval on his countenance and said, "You're right, sir; this is a lot of Tommy-rot which the Government makes us fill up. I'll put down you have come here for your health." Presumably he also affirmed that I was in possession of the required sum of money, although he never asked me. By travelling in the first-class, all these questions could, of course, have been avoided, but, while their meaning evidently shows that only wealthy people are wanted, the result is to induce people with limited incomes to assume a style beyond their means in order to avoid an insulting interrogation which may be conducted by a superior official who will endeavour to enforce a rigid compliance.



The travelling public, therefore, would do well to form a protection society with a view to having previous information of what is required of them, in order that passengers may be able to take precautions against the ever-increasing number of questions asked. By having a timely statement, however, of the attitudes of Governments and companies in this respect, the traveller would often be able to boycott those which exact too much, and what is perhaps more important, the fear of the boycott would cause both Governments and companies to lower their demands for fear of losing trade.

The following will give some idea of the extent to which Great Britain has allowed herself to be dominated by her larger colonies in an undignified attempt to please them at all costs. On the occasion of a voyage to South Africa a British officer of high standing found that his daughter was expected to fill in a schedule to the effect that she was a respectable person. The questions asked and declarations required were so insulting that, rather than allow her to see them, he filled in the form himself, after which he handed her the paper with the remark, "You may sign it, but you mustn't read it." "A nice way to treat an old soldier travelling with his daughter," was the officer's indignant comment on such treatment.

The conduct of the different lines of steamers as regards these questions must, of course, be modified by the requirements of the Governments of the countries at whose ports the steamers call, although the companies naturally tend to follow the procedure of their own Governments. Thus, of all the lines which travel the West Indian waters, those of the United States require most particulars from the traveller, and the Canadian comes next in order. English companies appear to be intermediate between these and some of the Continental ones. With the few French, Austrian and Italian steamers in these parts I have had no experience, but the German and Danish lines are exemplary in this respect, and require very few particulars, while in a short voyage in the Quebec line, between two neighbouring West Indian islands, I had trouble owing to not remembering the exact date of my last vaccination, although there was no outbreak of small-pox.

The Government of Barbados assumes a somewhat exceptional attitude towards other British subjects, owing to having representative institutions. It was fortunate, indeed, that two missionaries on their way to Demerara did not want to break their journey in this Island, otherwise, being third-class passengers, they might have been considered undesirable visitors, and refused admittance in such terms as "No heathen here, so you're not wanted."

My attention had been attracted towards these two young men early in the voyage. A neat-looking person with the orthodox collar asked me some question near the confines of the second and third class. He looked so clerical that I thought he must have been a first-class passenger who had deviated from his high estate, but on asking him whether he were a first or a second class passenger, he replied rather ruefully, "No, we're travelling in the third class, and I don't think that my colleague will get over it for a month." The lay colleague, with no pretensions to clerical dress, presently came up and proved himself to be a practical young fellow, for just then



another third-class passenger, of that peculiar kind which initiates a voyage with frequent libations, appeared on the scene and made a somewhat incoherent appeal to the company to join him in them. The lay missionary took the inebriate kindly but firmly by the arm and said, "Come round to the other side of the steamer and let me show you the polar star." I rather pitied these young men, not so much for the small amount of discomfort, as for the false position which travelling in the third class at sea confers on respectable people, and remarked to my clerical acquaintance that it would be advisable to repeat the polar star treatment, so that when he was relating this occurrence to the bishop at the end of the journey he might be able to deprecate his present mode of travelling from a clerical rather than a personal point of view by saying, "My lord, we had to show that man the polar star at least seven times." "Ah, you don't know how they get at us on the score of humility," replied the poor missionary.



## CHAPTER XI. IN BARBADOS.

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### THE BLACK GIRLS OF BARBADOS.

*(A West Indian Ballad.)*

By "VAQUERO."

West Indian Isles are very sweet  
 With sugarcane and spices,  
 Their products would be hard to beat  
 With any other nices ;  
 But of all the nice things that they can  
 Produce, there's not one grows  
 That's nicer and that's sweeter than  
 The black girls of Barbados.

Each pretty head has got its wool,  
 Each pretty foot has five toes,  
 No other girls equal in full  
 The black girls of Barbados.

Don't talk to me of eyes of blue  
 And languid Grecian features,  
 I do not know what I should do  
 With such insipid creatures ;  
 Give me a swarthy Sambo skin  
 With white teeth set in two rows,  
 And eyes that gleam like starlight in  
 The black girls of Barbados.

Each pretty head, &c.

These girls will toil like men all day  
 At field or indoor duty,  
 They're good alike at work and play,  
 The sun won't spoil their beauty ;  
 But when they're out upon a spree  
 And dressed up in their best clothes,  
 Hi ! that's the time that you should see  
 The black girls of Barbados.

Each pretty head, &c.

Oh yes, you say you'd rather drink,  
 And you like sports —hi ! you, sir !  
 Well, I've had time enough to think,  
 And you shall have my answer :  
 Take drink, and sports, and all the rest,  
 Canejuice and sweet potatoes,  
 And leave for me the very best,  
 The black girls of Barbados.

Each pretty head, &c.





Dancing a Jajú.



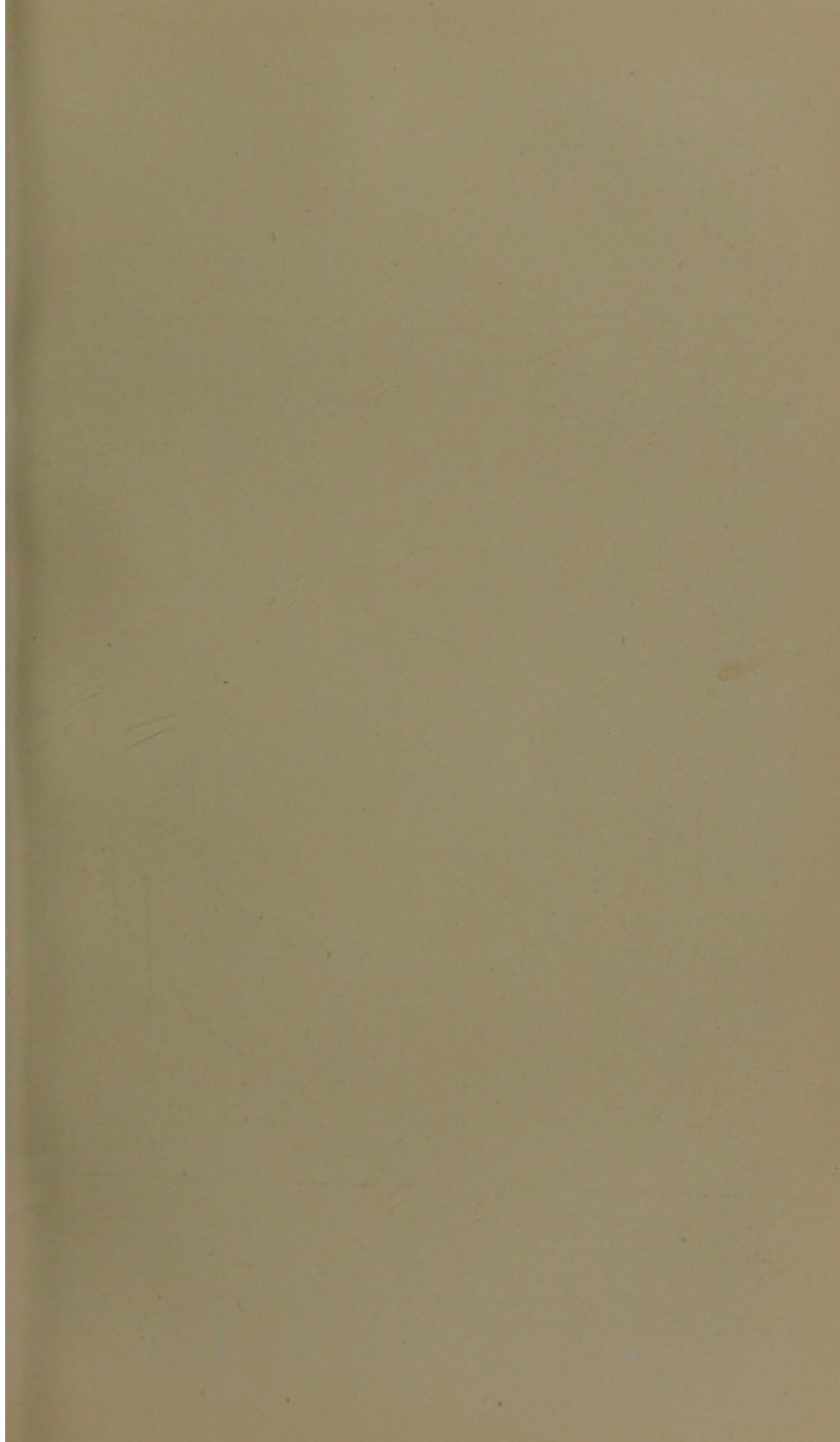


The Wharf, just below the Bridge, Bridgetown.

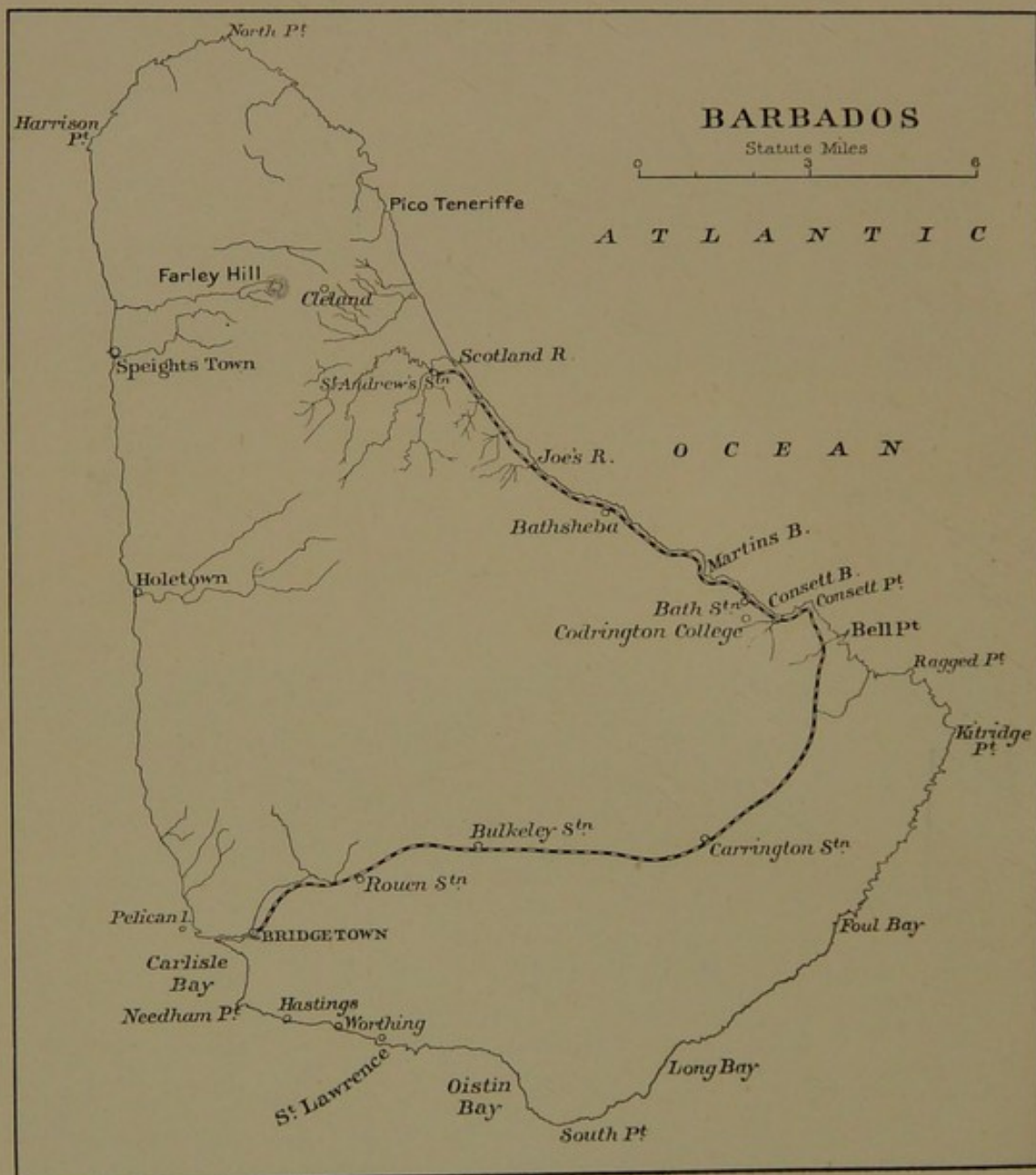


Swan Street, Bridgetown.











**B**ARBADOS, the plainest and most pleasant of the West Indian Islands! Its name calls to mind so many amusing stories of the olden time, and its position as a port of call has kept it so prominently before the public that a stranger becomes quite surprised at finding that it is hardly more than twenty miles in length, and is smaller than the neighbouring Island of St. Lucia, about which he has heard little or nothing. Nor does its homely appearance correspond with those glowing pictures of West Indian scenery which books of travel have taught the reader to expect. Instead of a luxuriance of tropical foliage in the low lands and picturesque streams in the mountain regions, we behold a tame-looking shore above which the undulating ground rises to no great height, while both coast and interior are almost denuded of trees, in the place of which incessant canefields appear. The few rugged mountains hardly attain the height of one thousand feet, and rivers are so scarce as hardly to be a feature in the scenery.

Bridgetown, however, is one of the largest and most lively towns in the British West Indies, and the creek, from whose bridge the capital has been named, is the centre of all its maritime traffic. The creek, indeed, cannot be entered by ocean-going steamers, which must anchor out in the roadstead, although its banks are lined with schooners which do much of the inter-island trade. The reason why these areas present such animation may be attributed in part to that overcrowding which must always result if sufficient forethought has not been exercised in providing sufficient space for the commerce of a busy maritime town, while Broad Street, the principal thoroughfare, appears to have been so called in derision, on account of its narrow dimensions. Part of the hustle, however, must be attributed to the qualities of the Barbadian negroes themselves, who, from having been cramped for space on their little Island for so many generations, are taught by experience that they must make an effort if they want to live at home, and are thus on the continual look-out for opportunities of offering their services or bartering their wares.

A person of moderate means is to some extent rewarded for surmounting the difficulties which beset his entrance by finding that the ruling prices for most necessities are less in Barbados than in the neighbouring islands, a fact which I discovered on the first evening of my arrival, when I was taken to a good central hotel where the daily tariff was about six shillings. It is not desirable, however, to remain in a place which overlooks a crowded and narrow street when there are so many nice suburban residences, so on the next day I wandered about in search of a quiet lodging, with the result of obtaining such reliable information at one of the principal stores that I have returned several times since to the house of the same friendly family.

In Barbados, which has not received the nickname of "Little England" for nothing, the stranger soon becomes aware of an environment somewhat different to that in other parts of the West Indies. This may be attributed to a variety of causes, such as density of population with the natural consequence of loss of wild plant life, comparative nearness to the Old World, salubrious climate which offers



a minimum of tropical complaints, cheapness of living; but whatever the reason may be, the fact remains that there is, so to say, an atmosphere of homely comfort which is more acceptable than pretentious luxury. Such an attribute, however, makes the Island a bad subject for a book of travel, as there is no room for incidents by "flood and field" in a country where one might live for a year without collecting as good material for writing as could be found in a month in some of the other islands. One might go to Haiti for adventure, to Jamaica for a combination of scenery and luxurious living, to Dominica and Grenada for the beauties of nature, but one would choose Barbados for a place to rest in.

The central parts of Bridgetown present a solid and old-world appearance to which the handsome stone public buildings greatly contribute, and although the principal streets are narrow the stores at their sides will probably offer better value for the money than any others in the West Indies. Two of these streets running parallel to each other may be taken as representative purveyors for the two different sections of the community. The before-mentioned Broad Street, containing the principal stores in whose windows the merchandise displayed would not seem out of place in a European capital, is largely patronized by the white and better-class coloured people, while the less pretentious Swan Street is the favourite of the poorer negro population, because the articles sold here are cheaper. In the day-time both of these streets are busy centres; Swan Street, however, has the whole traffic to itself on Saturday nights, for while the more aristocratic Broad Street closes its stores earlier than usual on that day, Swan Street keeps open until late in order to satisfy the wants of its poorer clients, when a dense mass of people who have no desire to do any shopping avail themselves of the opportunity of the lit-up windows to promenade up and down for the purpose of showing themselves off in their best clothes and seeing their friends. On such occasions no crowd could be more orderly, and the services of the black policemen are hardly ever required.

The residential parts adjoining the business area are built on somewhat the same lines as in other large British West Indian towns, having a number of well-put-up houses and villas in the better localities, while little wooden shanties are prevalent in the poorer quarters which here show signs of overcrowding. Their inmates, however, have an advantage over their counterparts in large European cities in being within easy reach of the country. Every place has its own fashions; thus I soon found out that the eastern suburbs of Bridgetown were considered more desirable than the western. This was not so much from pure caprice as because the eastern side in the West Indies means the side exposed to the sea breeze, an affair of great importance in a region where the wind generally blows in the same direction. It will, indeed, be noticed on the map that most of the capitals of the West Indian Islands lie on the western coast, the reason being that a shelter can be thus obtained for ships and steamers which sometimes have to anchor in an open roadstead, and this is also the reason why some of these sheltered places are unusually hot.

Bridgetown lies on the extreme south-west of the Island, so that



by going only two or three miles further along the southern coast a considerable amount of sea breeze can be obtained from the windward side, and therefore the eastern suburbs are considered desirable for residence. There is no better way of becoming acquainted with the town and its vicinity than by using the excellent tramcar service which connects the maritime suburbs on both sides, and also runs inland for about two miles. These cars start from the northern side of the bridge close to the public buildings, and we will follow them south-easterly along the coast to that favourite residential area which has its centre near Hastings.

On crossing the bridge the space at the side of the road is largely occupied by merchandise in transit, such as casks of sugar in mule carts, bags of provisions on their way to or from the warehouses, heavily laden hand-carts drawn or pushed by stalwart negroes; the sight, however, which will arrest the stranger's eye most is that of the gangs of patient coal-women who balance their loads on their heads as they walk erectly from the coal heap to the barges at the side of the creek, sometimes singing as they go along, while if they loiter the head woman may be heard to say, "Now, girls, don't lose time." Poor women! they only earn tenpence a day for their hard work, and even this is considered high wages for female labour in Barbados.

The inferior-looking shops patronized by the negro workers who live in the little wooden cottages bounding the narrow lanes give this locality a rather squalid aspect, although the road improves along the sea front as it approaches the Garrison, more than a mile from the town. Here are the barracks where the soldiers of the West Indian Regiment used to be quartered, and the name has clung to the place long after the soldiers have gone. The local Government has lately made arrangements for buying these serviceable buildings, with a view to making the necessary alterations for converting them into private residences. In the midst of the barracks lies a large stretch of grass about half a mile across which is called the Savanna. This indispensable space does duty as a field for public sports on race days and similar occasions, when its green surface is invaded by thousands of townspeople. From the Garrison to Hastings, nearly a mile farther on, the road is for the most part thickly lined with superior houses, amongst which are some handsome detached villas. The whole of this vicinity indeed may be called "the white man's area," and this is partly why it is so much esteemed. Hastings itself is perhaps even more popular than the Garrison, for here on the sea front is the promenade called the Rocks, where the band often plays in the evening. Within sight of the Rocks is the Marine Hotel, where it is considered becoming that the first-class passengers so favoured by the Government should make their temporary home.

The chief attraction, however, about Hastings is the excellent bathing place which is a source of health and pleasure alike to residents and visitors. In the West Indies, indeed, sea-bathing assumes rather a different aspect to that in colder climates, where this pastime can only be enjoyed for a few summer months, except by the most hardy. In these warm latitudes the weather and sea-water are so mild that a person must be quite an invalid if he cannot continue to bathe.



during the so-called winter, which is warmer than the British summer. Exercise of this kind is especially valuable in a country where the heat makes violent exertion uncomfortable under ordinary conditions, and where even a long immersion in the sea will only just cool down the body sufficiently. Of course bathing can be had on the coast in many places, but not with the same comfort as at Hastings. In these parts, indeed, there is always some risk attached to swimming far in the open sea from the chance of a shark in the vicinity, and although fatalities of this kind are rare, they have occurred. At Hastings, however, a natural barrier in the form of a reef runs parallel with the bathing place for a considerable distance, leaving an interval of water with a clear sandy bottom. At high tide the waves break over this reef, when the swimming area may be seven feet deep in places, but when the tide is out the reef shows itself above the water, which then approximates to a depth of four feet. In either case it is so difficult for a large fish to remain unperceived that a barracoota which once entered could not get out again and was killed.

These baths, however, are not absolutely free from certain risks, attendant on the vicinity of the ladies' bathing place, which belongs, in fact, to the same establishment. Those of the fair sex who reside in the Island generally keep at a discreet distance, but during one season we were invaded by some lady tourists who had evidently been accustomed to mixed bathing. On this occasion I had entered the water cautiously under the immediate protection of a genial clergyman, who knew something about our fair but intrusive visitors. It was but natural that I should ask who a certain lady was who swam in front of our bathing-house, in fact within a few yards of us.

"They say she is a widow," replied the clergyman.

"Widows are dangerous," I remarked.

"Some widows, not all," said my companion, mildly correcting a time-honoured but rather too sweeping assertion.

"But is she really a widow?" was my inquiry on a subsequent morning, for I had noticed a slight stress on the word "say."

"Well she's not exactly a widow, they say she's divorced."

"Then she's D.D."

"What does that mean?"

"Doubly dangerous."

The tram-line extends to St. Lawrence about two miles farther along the sea front, where the suburban area may be said to end, as any residences beyond here would be rather isolated. The railway from Bridgetown, however, after traversing the southern interior of the Island, reaches the eastern coast and runs along it as far as St. Andrews in the north-east, so I availed myself of the train for making an expedition to Bathsheba, a rather favourite seaside tourist resort. In this neighbourhood the scenery is supposed to have some pretensions, although in my opinion Martin's Bay, a little nearer town, is a prettier place, the chief advantage on this windward coast consisting in the strong sea breeze which enables a greater amount of exercise to be taken without causing



a person to become too hot. After wandering about in search of views I came to where some cane was being carted. The hilly nature of the ground nearly caused an accident, for while the cart was being driven along an abrupt incline, one of the wheels tilted up in the air and might have over-balanced if a plucky black woman had not jumped up on it, thus assisting its descent with her weight.

Most of the country here, as elsewhere, is merely a succession of canefields, so after taking a photograph of the scene I went in search of breakfast, which my early start from Bridgetown had rendered very desirable. There was a little village in which nothing in the shape of a meal could be obtained, and I was obliged to visit one of those large hotels which minister to the wants of wealthy tourists. The lady of the house, who showed me over the premises, informed me with pride that a certain titled gentleman used to lodge here, while I inwardly made the reflection that my slender means were more suitable for the western and cheaper side of the Island.

Before going there, however, a few words must be said about that part of the southern interior through which the train passes before reaching the eastern coast. The Island is here at its greatest breadth and, to judge from the size of the factories along the railway line, the most valuable plantations must lie in this direction. There is no broken country in this part to sever the continuity of the canefields on the rolling ground, where the watershed is so slight that in the absence of rivers it is not noticeable. This want of running water has made it necessary to make large ponds in several places for the live stock. At Bulkeley, about five miles from town, a central factory, or *usine* as it is called in the French-speaking islands, has been lately erected, where, besides crushing the produce of the owner's plantation, the cane of those who have no efficient machinery of their own is also treated. I was shown over this factory, which was even more elaborate than the one before described in Jamaica. The soil in this neighbourhood is evidently deeper than in most parts, in proof of which the manager told me that in places one might sink a hole for more than twenty feet in depth before reaching the rock, while in many places near the coast the rock crops up so often as to leave the impression that the Island has only a very superficial covering.

At this period the western coast was easy of access in the motor-cars which had commenced to run a few months previously between Bridgetown and Speightstown, which latter lies about twelve miles north of the capital. Motors were still such a novelty that as we went along the level coast road the children frequently cheered, while one young countrywoman broke out into a wild dance of the Jajú kind on seeing us pass. This trip was indeed much more interesting than the one to Bathsheba, for instead of passing at the side of canefields or along the rocky shore, the motor ran through a succession of villages the whole time, the human interest more than making up for any lack of scenic effect.

Much of this coast land does not seem very valuable, the soil being so shallow that the rock frequently appears above the surface, a reason perhaps why the negro population lies so thickly on



this side of the Island. The cottages here, while having the same general appearance as those in town, tend to be larger and better, with the great advantage of being in the country, and thus not hemmed in with those squalid surroundings which are so often seen when the poorer classes are cramped for want of space. Nowhere in Barbados, however, are the cottages of the negroes so picturesque as in Jamaica. The interior, indeed, may be better, and the occupier a smarter person, but the nakedness of a landscape from which the trees have been removed affects the appearance of the dwellings, which stand out like large wooden boxes on a bare surface; and the people have become so accustomed to this somewhat desolate appearance that they hardly make any attempt to improve it by the easy method of planting a few hardy trees or shrubs. In this respect they only copy the plantation houses, which, although often fine stone structures, are generally destitute of that surrounding of plant life which is one of the charms of the West Indies, almost the only effort in this direction being an occasional stiff row of cabbage palms. Indeed, if it were not for the constantly seen sugarcane, this comparative absence of trees would almost make a stranger doubt that he was really in a tropical country, and may have contributed towards the nickname of "Little England." Another similarity between the two countries is the frequency of the old-fashioned English windmill which appears in so many of the views of typical Barbadian scenery. These windmills, however, are steadily on the decrease, as steam power is now generally used by most of the larger factories.

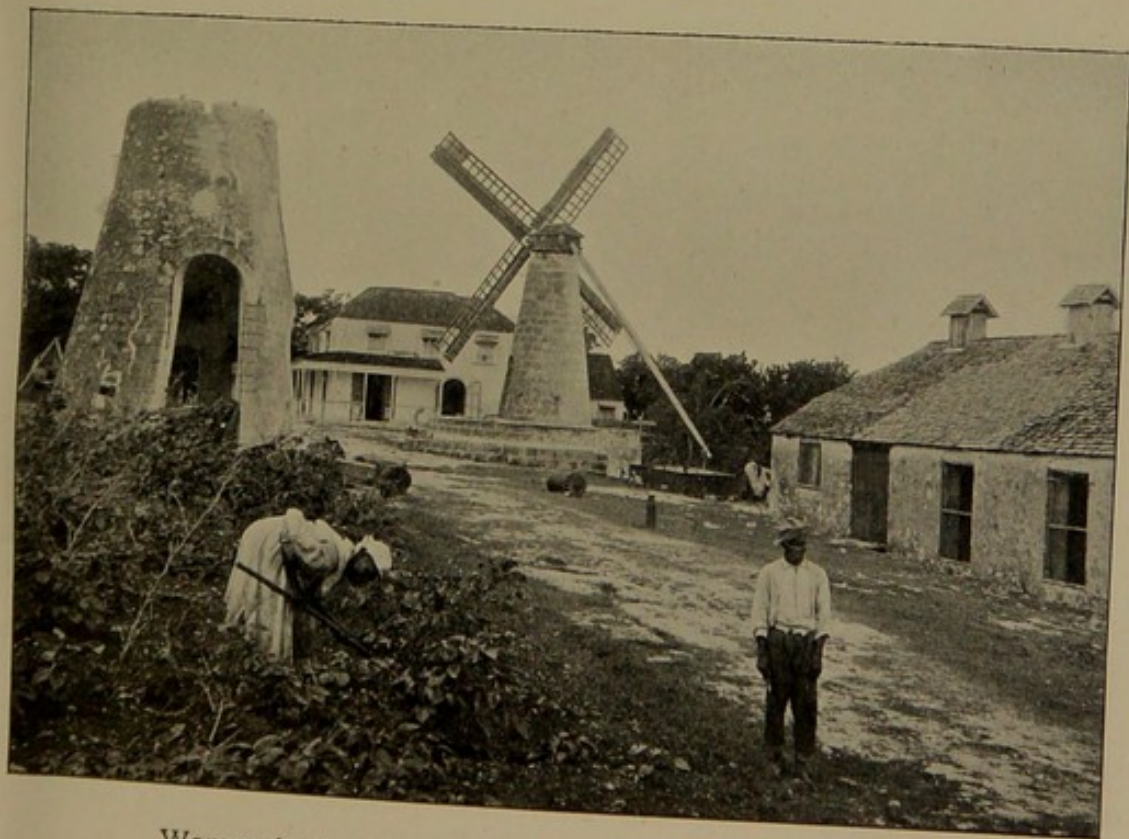
The photograph of Prospect, about six miles from Bridgetown on this road, will give a good idea of the old Barbadian country house with its solid structures and bareness of surroundings. The windmill in front is used for drawing water, while the dismantled ruin to the left is an old sugar-mill which was no longer required owing to the surrounding estate being under the cultivation of cotton, among which the woman is hoeing. At this time sugar was paying so badly that many of the planters had turned their attention towards cotton, although with a slight rise in prices sugar has become the favourite again; and it is, indeed, to be hoped that an industry upon which Barbados is so dependent will never be reduced to a level which no longer affords a fair profit.

The motor-bus accomplished the twelve-mile journey between the capital and Speightstown in one hour; not bad travelling when it is remembered that passengers have to be taken up or let down on the way. The black and coloured people, who form a large proportion of the passengers, pride themselves in dressing well on such occasions, when the younger women are often attired in very good taste, although it may sometimes excite an inward smile to see a black girl with a veil over her face as if she was afraid of becoming sunburnt. There is, however, another means of conveyance for the poorest people who could never afford to pay one shilling, by means of the schooners which leave Speightstown in the morning and return from the capital in the afternoon. This mode of travelling is very popular from the cheapness of the passage, which only costs threepence, besides having the advantage of giving more space to



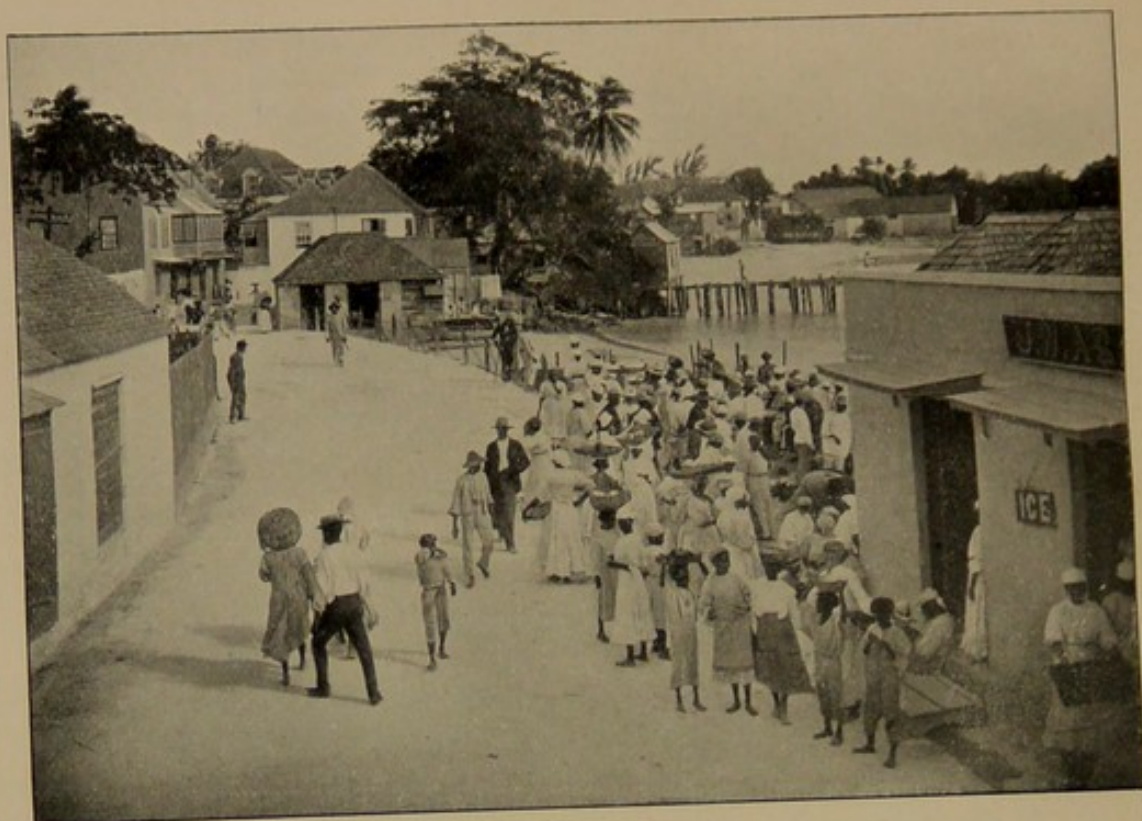


Carting Cane at Bathsheba—Eastern Coast.

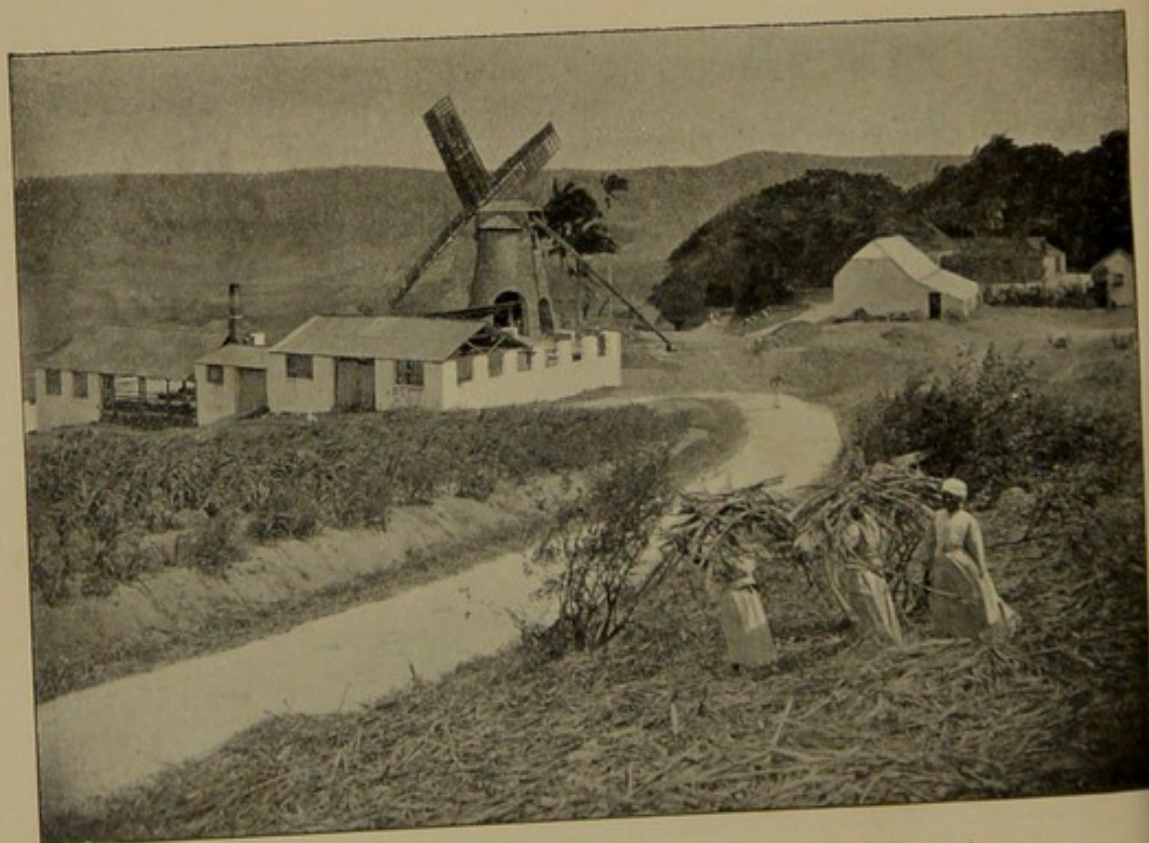


Woman hoeing in the Cotton-field, Prospect Plantation.





Speightstown, twelve miles from Bridgetown—Western Coast.



Cleland Plantation, Northern Interior of the Island.  
St. Andrew's Mountains in the distance.



those who are carrying merchandise, such as fowls and eggs, to market.

Speightstown, although little frequented by tourists, is the only town in the Island, with the exception of course of the capital, where a stranger can obtain board and lodging. It does not consist, like other so-called towns, of a cluster of cottages built without any attempt at relation to each other, but has at least two good streets with several stores in them, and a nice accommodation house with moderate charges. The position is a good centre for exploring the northern part of the Island, and it was from here that I made my only walking trip, which will now be described.

I had started late in the morning with the intention of taking one or two photographs on the northern coast at a place called Animal Flower Cave, by which name the natives designate a cave on the coast where sea-anemones are attached to the submerged rocks. The road passed through canefields in which groups of men and women were working, the latter being always more numerous in Barbados, where it is not unusual to find one man superintending the work of a dozen female labourers. After walking about three miles I thought it would be prudent to obtain some refreshment before visiting an out-of-the-way place, so I went up to a rather superior cottage and surprised a black woman by asking her if she could sell me some bread and a cup of coffee. After some hesitation she did so, and I then continued my journey. The country, however, soon became so flat and uninteresting-looking that I gave up the expedition and began to retrace my steps rather disconsolately towards Speightstown. In Barbados the scenery is so similar that it is easy to lose the way on the bare white roads through the canefields, so when apparently about half the distance back I asked a woman who was walking by the side of her donkey-cart if I was going right for Speightstown. She told me that I had made a mistake, being now on the road to St. Andrews, seven miles distant, where she herself was going. This looked like a chance of seeing something new and of obtaining a guide into the bargain, so I followed the cart.

St. Andrews, at the terminus of the railway line on the eastern coast, a few miles beyond Bathsheba, is one of the most important of the little settlements in Barbados, lying nearly opposite Speightstown, on the other side of the Island. In this part the northern watershed is rather steep, so that when we approached the summit, the donkey could hardly draw the load up the hill. The woman and her daughter led the animal by turns, the one not thus occupied being obliged to push the cart behind, when I could do no less than help my guides. The donkey, with our assistance, was just able to draw the load to the top of the rising ground at Farley Hill, where we stopped to rest before descending on the eastern side. Near our resting place there was a cluster of trees among which grew a considerable number of scrubby bushes, in an area so large that it might almost be called a wood, a somewhat unusual sight in Barbados. A sudden exclamation of the woman, "Look at the monkeys!" made me watch for these creatures which are only seen in a few of the most secluded places. No monkeys, however, appeared, but in their place some black children came out of the bushes, when I could not help thinking that



a mistake of this kind on the part of a white person might have been resented.

We soon got out of this wooded patch and, as the road was now all down hill, the donkey required very little help. On reaching the open plantations near Cleland, about one mile farther on, there was a better view than is generally seen in Barbados, where the rolling ground tends to hide distant objects. It was, however, rather too late to commence operations, so I determined to go to St. Andrews that night and to return on the next day to take the photograph. The descent from Cleland to St. Andrews is rather steep, the latter lying on a plain near the coast partly surrounded by hills, which although among the highest in Barbados have nothing picturesque about them, being rugged and bare as the view will show. When we reached the outskirts of the settlement, consisting for the most part of scattered wooden dwellings, my companions turned aside to go to their cottage, and I had already obtained enough information to know that it would be difficult to obtain accommodation anywhere. It was now about sundown, and although the flat ground was dotted with little houses, none of them appeared likely to afford me a shelter. On inquiring at one of the stores I was told that they could not supply me with food or lodging, although at last they consented to let me have a meal. A place to lie down, however, was even more important, as one can generally buy some kind of breadstuff, so I tried another store with an equally unsuccessful result.

Several people now suggested that I should present myself at the clergyman's house and ask for hospitality. This, however, did not commend itself to me. There was little doubt that I should have been kindly received, but it did not seem fair to inconvenience strangers whom I could not offer to pay in return. Night was now falling, and as a last resource I went to the railway station to see what kind of accommodation the seats or benches afforded for sleeping. The veranda of this building would not have made a bad camping ground, only for the uncomfortable feeling that something might be stolen in so public a place while I was asleep. Necessity, however, had resigned me to spend the night here, when some sympathetic person told me that it might be possible to arrange with the schoolmaster for leave to sleep in the school-house. The idea seemed a good one, and on asking for permission it was readily given. I now returned to the store for the promised meal, which, however simple, was most welcome, and then guided myself to the schoolhouse by the light which came from its door. The coloured schoolmaster was a very good fellow. He could only offer me one of the long seats to lie on, but he provided me with a large cushion to make it soft for my bones. I was now able to undress in the security of a closed building, and after smoking some of those good Jamaican cigarettes, frequently sold in Barbados, I slept the sleep of those who help to push donkey-carts up the hills.

Next morning, after taking my breakfast at the store, I started on the return journey. No train was going to Bridgetown until either that evening or the following day, but in any case I should have preferred to return by the way I had come so as to photograph the plantation, and was naturally anxious to leave a place where



there was so much difficulty in obtaining the necessities of life. Retracing my way over the plain I passed the rather fine-looking church at the foot of the rising ground and arrived at Cleland before the heat of the day. While waiting for a more favourable position of the sun the white employee in charge of the sugar-factory invited me inside the building, where I rested and watched the sugar-making at the same time. Here the brown sugar was being made by the old-fashioned "muscovado" process, which to a person like myself, unacquainted with the business, was more interesting than the elaborate machinery which I had seen in Jamaica and in Barbados, because it was so simple that I could understand it.

On one side of the solid stone building were a succession of large cauldrons, about seven in number. The heat was so arranged as to increase gradually from one end to the other, the process commencing by pouring the juice of the cane into the cauldron where the least heat has been applied. These vessels were connected with each other by a channel at their upper extremities, so that after the juice had simmered for a sufficient time in the first cauldron the upper part of the liquid was propelled along this open connection to the next cauldron by vigorous strokes of a spade in the hands of a black man. This treatment was repeated until the juice had reached the last cauldron, by which time the constant evaporation has made the juice very thick, and at this stage it is known by the name of "sling," presumably because a crane lowers a large pot into the liquid and slings it into a raised trough in the middle of the building. The trough has an arrangement, something after the manner of a churn, by which the juice is given revolving blows with paddles to make the saturated solution more disposed to "grain" or solidify, and it is now poured into a long trench on the opposite side, where it becomes brown sugar. When the solid sugar is cut out with a spade the liquid molasses may be seen trickling through it.

On most sugarcane estates the personnel resemble each other. The manager and the chief employees are white men, while the field and factory hands are negroes. Among these latter certain kinds of work are generally considered to belong to men and others to women. Thus almost everything inside the factory is done by men, who also do all the driving of the carts in the field. Hoeing the ground and carrying the cane are done by women. Indeed, one cannot but admire the way in which these women do a good day's work for the bare pittance of sixpence. Many of them, without appearing to be of a muscular build, will perform a task which would tire a man unaccustomed to it. The supply of labour is so much in excess of the demand that this is popularly stated to be one of the causes of so many fires in the canefields. According to this theory the cane is purposely set on fire with the object of obtaining immediate employment, as the injury done will prevent any future growth, and thus the manager will have to start crushing at once in order to save the present values. Thus the loss is not so great as might be expected, besides which the crop is generally insured.

The remainder of my walk to Speightstown brought forth no further adventures, and, arriving in time to catch the motor-bus, I returned to Bridgetown on that very evening.



## CHAPTER XII.

## IN BARBADOS.

**I**F the scenery of Barbados is not on a par with that of most of the other West Indian Islands, its population is of unusual interest in the study of a civilized negro people, who here offer more facilities for showing how they have been affected by British rule than in Jamaica, which is the only other important island where this might be done. Almost all traces of Spanish occupation have, indeed, disappeared from Jamaica, but its very size favours a disparity among the inhabitants, while there is no room for differences of this kind in little Barbados, where the negroes are continually coming into contact with each other and with the white people, thus producing a similarity of speech and habits.

The Barbadian is eminently a smart negro, not merely from an educational point of view, but because he has travelled more than others in search of employment. He is largely represented in the police of the neighbouring islands, in the West Indian Regiment, in the gangs of labourers in Central and South America, and in every neighbouring country where there is a chance of earning that money which is so scarce in the home to which he hopes to return. In appearance he presents, of course, the usual characteristics of his race, although most observers are willing to admit that his standard in this respect is decidedly above the average, while several have gone as far as to praise the good looks of some of the women. This is somewhat of a new departure, for until recent years it has been customary for travellers to limit their admiration to the women of Martinique, as if there were no others of their race to compare with them, the real reason probably being that when a woman is good-looking she will be more readily noticed if she is showily dressed, and the bright colours of the stylish costumes in the French islands are more likely to attract attention than the more simple white dresses of British fashions.

The English spoken by Barbadians in general is very good. A negro from the country parts will be readily understood, and his language more nearly approaches the normal standard than that of many peasants at home, while the better class of coloured and black people speak so correctly that they might be taken for educated residents in Great Britain. There is, in fact, a kind of suavity in their speech which is especially noticeable in the coloured women and might be described as "English without asperity." It cannot be called an accent, for there is none, although there might be a slight intonation which is certainly pleasant to the ear. As in most of the other



islands, a negro or coloured person hardly ever affects an American accent, which in Barbados is rare even among the whites. Of course, a few local idioms, often used by the white people as well, break out from time to time, such as "How d'ee?" (How do you do?) "Hi!" (an exclamation of excitement) and "Oh yes" (an expression made in answer to a person). Occasionally the black people coin or adapt words from the foreign languages used in the other islands or on the mainland. Among these is the strangely sounding expression, *toot moon*, which means "everybody," being evidently taken from the French *tout le monde*.<sup>1</sup> The word *chupe* also requires explanation. It is usual for them to make a sucking sound with the lips in order to convey the idea of disapprobation or contempt. *Chupar* is the Spanish word for "to suck," therefore to *chupe* at anyone is a slight which would be resented.

It may have been already understood that the labour market is overstocked in Barbados, work is hard to obtain, and wages are low. Male labourers in the country only receive from tenpence to one shilling per diem, while sixpence is the usual payment for women, who, owing to their great excess in number, do a large part of the plantation work. Female household servants do not often earn more than five shillings per month, besides, of course, their food, and when their employers find fault with them for not working enough one cannot help wondering at so much work being done at the price. This dearth of employment at home has been the cause of the great exodus of Barbadian labourers during the last few years. Everyone in touch with the West Indies has been aware that a vast number have been working on the Panama Canal, but it was a revelation to see in statistics published in the *Times* newspaper that nearly twenty thousand men from this little island had been directly recruited for that purpose, not including those who went to the canal on their own account. According to the same information, the total number of recruits from all countries were under forty-four thousand, from which it would appear that the manual labour of Barbadians alone made nearly one-half of the Canal. Nearly half the manual work of a world's wonder done by one little West Indian Island! After this no one will be able to say that negroes in general or Barbadians in particular are lazy. They will not work for starvation wages, but they have proved that they will work for fair payment.

The poorer people have become so accustomed to count money in the American manner that they will hardly make any attempt to use the English standard, habitually calling half-pence by the name of cents, while even the bank has favoured a dual system by issuing notes of five dollars, which, of course, are ten pence in excess of one pound. The coinage, however, is English, so that in receiving any considerable sum of money the parts in paper and in metal follow the different systems of the two countries, which is very perplexing to strangers.

Fortunately, food is cheap in the Island, else the poorer classes would not be able to live. Numbers of flying-fish are caught on the leeward coast and often sell at less than a cent apiece. Vegetables

<sup>1</sup> See the "Chanson Créole" of Trinidad.



such as sweet potatoes, yams and cassava, are plentiful; while, however, there is plenty to eat the negroes cannot always afford a sufficiently nourishing diet, and are thus more liable to contract certain diseases. Occasionally the inhabitants have a somewhat unusual supply of food in the flesh of a whale. We are so accustomed to associate these creatures with cold climates that we almost forget that certain varieties are found in tropical waters. I was shown a place on the shore where the remains of several whales were lying in an atmosphere of decomposition too strong for a stranger to endure. It was something like rancid cod-liver oil, only worse.

Few people enjoy themselves on a holiday as much as these light-hearted Barbadians, who require little to make them happy. They are fond of attending race meetings, although, like many white people, it is not so much for the sake of the racing as for seeing their friends and showing off their clothes. Horse-races take place on the savanna, while the rather unusual sport of goat-races may be held anywhere. This latter is really a test of the running power of the man, and of his dexterity in guiding the goat, rather than a proof of the speed of the animal, which cannot go faster than the driver who runs behind, holding the reins. The photograph represents a scene of this kind in the suburbs, where the goats are being given a preliminary canter just before the race. Dancing and singing are probably their favourite amusements. I went one day to a place in the suburbs with the intention of photographing a public dance; it took place, however, in a room where the light was not strong enough for my purpose. The dances were all of the better known English kinds, and the pastime was conducted in a vigorous but orderly manner. This amusement is especially popular on account of that affinity towards each other which the sexes have in such a marked degree in the negro race. Even at work the man does not like to be separated from his womankind, who may be frequently seen sitting beside him in her best attire when he drives the mule team with a load of sugar from the plantation into town.

On festive occasions, whether at races, sports or dances, such a thing as an untidy black man or woman is hardly ever seen. Some may not go because they cannot afford to dress well; those who do go are, however, well dressed. A negro's best clothes are generally black or at least so dark that it makes a white man almost feel hot to look at them. His boots or shoes may be black, brown or white, but they must be clean. There is a great latitude in the style of hat. If he is ambitious, with aspirations to be or to look like an official, he may wear a pith helmet, although for those who only require to look smart a kind of Panama hat, real or imitation, is quite sufficient, while the ordinary mortal may be content with one of straw or felt. It would be too arduous to go into the details of the dresses of the females. They generally affect some light-coloured summer costume, generally white, with short sleeves and sometimes low necks, trimmed with lace. If the person is poor a plain straw hat will suffice, although there are endless varieties for those who can afford them. Very few, even among those who go barefoot on ordinary occasions, would venture to show themselves without boots or shoes of some kind. Here also, as with the men, there are great varieties of kinds and





Goat Races at Fontabelle—"A Preliminary Canter."



Dairy at the Garrison.





Men forking at Husband's Plantation.



Women hoeing at Hastings.



colours; perhaps the most effective is precisely the same as in Western Europe, a high-heeled white shoe on white embroidered stockings. A sunshade is very desirable for imparting a certain style, although it may not be exactly necessary, and the light-coloured cotton article does not cost much. In all seriousness, however, some of these black and brown girls would hold their own anywhere for figure and general appearance. Many of these stylish-looking females will be dressed very differently when they return to their work. The hat will be replaced by a white kerchief, the dress will be shorn of its glory, and the feet will be bare, but they have had their outing and will have it again.

Closely connected with their fondness for singing is their religion, which, although comprising almost every kind of Christian worship, is especially popular in those forms which introduce an unusual quantity of hymns into the service. At such times the southern temperament of the negro is deeply under the influence of religious emotion. The women here, as in Jamaica, carry their fervour to such a degree that hymn-singing becomes a daily pastime. A poor woman used to pass the house where I lived, towards dawn every morning, singing the same peculiar song. By degrees I became acquainted with the tune and a few of the words, which were those of the well-known sectarian hymn, "My troubles are all over when I come home," which she considered suitable to her own case after returning from her night's work.

In the matter of education, at any rate, the Government can hardly be accused of not providing for the wants of its negro children. In most of the little country villages there are school-houses which are so well attended that the greater number of the young people have learnt to read and write. A country schoolmaster might receive about sixteen dollars monthly from the Government, besides small fees of from a halfpenny to a penny a week from the parents of the children. The poverty of the people, however, often causes them to neglect the regular payment of these trifling sums, and this places the schoolmaster in an awkward position, as his official salary is supposed to be supplemented by the pence of his scholars; thus when these payments fall into arrears it becomes a question to decide how long he shall continue to teach some child who no longer brings his fees. Many children, therefore, only go to school at intervals and leave when they are in the third or fourth standard, in which cases their writing is still very imperfect.

In spite, however, of their comparatively good education as compared with some of the other islands, the belief in obeah has not altogether disappeared. From time to time a sheet of printed matter, purporting to be the confession of an obeah-man or woman, is offered for sale and is eagerly bought by the people. A few extracts from one of these is here given.

"The Flying Obeah-Woman. This obeah-woman after a long career fell sick on Friday last and it was a great talk about the town and she began to make her confession to the people."

"I can turn into a rat, sometime a big dog, sometime a crab, sometime a monkey, sometime a snake, sometime a tiger-cat—one night I turn into a cow and frighten my brother and cause him to die, I have



10 spirits, 4 rats, 5 black cats, 20 snake and 4 crapo—that is what I work with.” “I work for the best people in Arima, San<sup>1</sup> Grande, Prince Town and Port-of-Spain.” “I can also fly, my aunt was the strongest obeah woman ever was in Grenada, is she that teach me to work.” “I can fly to Panama or New York in a night.”

These few extracts are taken from a page of like material, of which the street-seller soon sold every copy. It is more than probable that this was no true confession, but a mere fiction for the purpose of making money. Even so, the author has used considerable judgment in stringing his matter together so as to make it appear like a true story to his public, and much can be read between the lines. It will be noticed how rats, black cats and snakes are part of the stock-in-trade, which seems to have been here adapted from that of ordinary witchcraft, while the frog is generally called a “crapo” (*crapaud*) even in English-speaking Barbados in order to impart a mysterious effect. In the next place Grenada and Trinidad appear to have been the scenes of the obeah work, by which may be inferred that these imperfectly anglicized islands are better fields for superstition than Barbados or that distance from home favours the marvellous. The obeah woman can also fly. This is another proof of the imitative nature of the negro, who has come to understand that flying is the latest wonder. The woman, however, flies to Panama and to New York, not to London or to Paris. Politically and commercially this is the pith of the whole matter. The United States, by their tendency towards empire since the end of the last century, culminating in the completion of the Panama Canal, have succeeded in impressing on West Indians of all colours that the American and not their own Government is the ruling power in these parts.

Barbadian negroes are very fond of social gatherings and belong to so many provident societies that a considerable sum must be spent in paying the salaries of the officials. Some of the names which are frequently conspicuous on the small wooden roadside houses are rather peculiar, such as “The Poor Man’s Relief and Burial Society”; while, however, it may be presumed that the primary object of these institutions is a kind of insurance against bad times, the people are very fond of meeting to make or amend their rules, and become so excited when some burning question is put to the vote that the winning side may cheer the result loudly.

It has been already noticed that the exterior of most houses in Barbados has generally a bare aspect from want of sufficient foliage around it. This want of sufficient plant life is not altogether the fault of the negro, who is an agriculturist by nature and has generally planted some kind of trees or shrubs around his dwelling in other islands where land is less dear. In Barbados very few of the negroes own the ground on which their cottage stands, considering themselves fortunate if they even own the building for which, otherwise, they would have to pay a heavy rent. Thus, in the poorer suburbs of the town a little one-roomed wooden cottage, worth about six pounds, will fetch a rental of one shilling by the week, amounting

<sup>1</sup> Evidently meant for Sangre Grande. The Spanish of the obeah woman or her biographer is as defective as the English.



to more than one-third of the total value of the building at the end of the year. The people, therefore, have no inducement to improve the surroundings of a dwelling which they may have to leave. Most of them, however, aspire to live in their own house, which they move to another place if they cannot agree with the owner of the land; thus a little wooden cottage is often seen in transit with a group of men around it. The walls of their dwellings are generally tastefully decorated, and if they can afford it they often buy a few pieces of good furniture.

From what has already been said the character of the Barbadian negro may have been partially understood. While, however, under English rule, he has become the type of a smart and efficient worker, the bad qualities which he has developed under the same tutelage must also be mentioned. Prominent among these is his offensive familiarity towards white strangers, and this familiarity occasionally becomes downright insolence. He is an inveterate beggar who asks for alms, not as a suppliant, but in an independent manner, and, as in Jamaica, the combination of begging and familiarity so often encountered on the country roads detracts much from the pleasure of walking. This undesirable combination is certainly due to British environment, as it does not exist in the foreign islands or even in those British ones where the language and customs are still foreign; the causes, however, cannot be tabulated in a few decisive words, and will therefore be discussed at length in the last chapter. Strangers, or at least white people who are not regular employers of labour, are generally the recipients of this somewhat insolent familiarity, the negro being well aware that the assumption of such a manner would cause immediate dismissal from plantation or work-yard, and that he would soon be unable to obtain employment. He would, therefore, be most unlikely to say to his employer, "Give us a match, old fellow," or "How d'ee, uncle?" in the style which he often adopts towards white people who are less essential to his livelihood. From this familiar stage to that of downright insolence is but a short transition, which may occur on any emergency. I told an Englishman that, if he were walking in front of a Barbadian negro who was in a hurry, the latter might say, "Out of the way, old fellow." "Why, I'd bring my cane down on him if he spoke like that," said the Englishman. "That's just where you would be wrong," I replied. "If the negro were a powerful man he would half kill you without fear of legal consequences, as he could prove that you had assaulted him, and would declare that he had only acted in self-defence, while if he were not inclined towards using violent means he would take a legal action against you for damages."

They are, indeed, so partial to law that the precincts of the Court-house are continually thronged with litigants, almost all of whom are black or coloured people; and although most of these cases are of a trivial description, the results are sometimes serious to one of the contending parties, who may be imprisoned in default of paying the fine imposed. The following is an example of their tendency towards litigation. When I arrived on the scene a number of people had collected around a buggy in a street not much frequented by traffic. The horse was standing on a soft felt hat which had



presumably fallen off the head of its owner, who was making no effort to recover his property, but was already asking to be paid for damages. The black driver, being the only person in the buggy except a little child, was unable to leave his seat, although he declared that the horse was quite quiet, and would allow his leg to be lifted off the hat. This, however, the owner would not do in his desire for monetary compensation, rather than the hat itself. Finally, I lifted up the horse's hind leg and gave the apparently undamaged hat to its owner, who seemed very disgusted with the result, claiming, however, compensation to the last.

Barbados is not a Crown Colony, like almost all the other British West Indian Islands, having its own duly elected House of Assembly. This instance of an elective representation which has existed for so long without detriment to the interests of the white minority has been cited as a reason for granting a similar privilege to the other islands of this group, and, indeed, no objection could be made on the part of the dominant race to such a concession if only the proposed change were made on exactly the same lines. The poverty, indeed, of most of the negroes is so great that few have sufficient means to entitle them to the suffrage, while the person for whom they vote must be possessed of a considerable property qualification. This is almost equivalent to saying that the few who have votes can only record them in favour of a white or a coloured man, as there are very few negroes who have, or are likely to have, sufficient means to make them eligible, and in point of fact an elected negro would be the rarest of occurrences. It is the white people of Barbados who are proud of their elective Assembly, and not the black, who are either indifferent or opposed to a system in which they are hardly represented. The side which a coloured person would take in any contention between the two races would, of course, depend upon circumstances. If the person were light in colour and comfortably situated, the question might be taken rather from the point of view of the ruling race, while under opposite conditions the negro cause would be espoused. There are many light-coloured people who, except for the trace in appearance due to the cross in their blood, cannot be distinguished in manner or sentiment from Barbadians of purely white race, and should be an invaluable factor in representing the needs of their country, owing to their education, and that admixture of blood which enables them to see both sides of the question in that West Indian home where their aspirations are centred.

Education also makes a great difference in the behaviour of a negro towards white people. The better class would not demean themselves by the assumption of a manner which they know is prevalent among "rough niggers," but endeavour to prove their equality by copying the customs of the white people with whom they come into contact. The "rough nigger," on the contrary, tries to prove his equality by licensed impudence. Fortunately, this inclination is to some extent restrained by the inward conviction that he is playing an impossible part, otherwise it would be difficult to live in peace.

As in Jamaica, the small white minority is chiefly represented by planters and merchants, together with their superior employees, and



by the professional classes. There are also a few so-called "poor whites," the descendants of those unfortunate people who were sent out in bondage to the West Indies for political reasons, and it is a forcible reminder of the inhumanity of those times that successive generations of these truly white slaves should have been condemned to work in the canefields, when even the few light-coloured free labourers who are now occasionally seen in them have a shrivelled and worn appearance, contrasting strongly with that of the exuberant negro, who is at home under the burning sun.

The article in the *Times*<sup>1</sup> newspaper to which allusion has already been made with reference to the labourers on the Panama Canal, presents the problem before the West Indies of finding employment for thousands of negroes who have been working for far higher wages than they can expect to obtain at home. This is a subject which should especially interest the Government of Barbados, owing to the large number of labourers supplied by this Island. It is stated that, "the Canal worker is not an agriculturist." This assertion is far too sweeping. The repatriated Barbadian will not, it is true, be satisfied with having to buy all the necessities of life out of the daily wage of one shilling, after earning nearly three times as much, exclusive of food, although he would willingly work at home on his own land if he had it. It seems rather an anomaly that in this thickly populated Island there should be such unbroken extents of canefields, which, by all accounts, are not very remunerative at present prices, and yet no room for the negro's homestead. Many of these canal workers have saved a little money, and there is no reason why a system of land settlement formulated by a large-minded Government should not be attended with the same good results as in the neighbouring and less densely populated Island of St. Vincent, relative to which the following extract is taken from "The West Indies" (Macmillan). "Since 1899 a number of estates have been compulsorily acquired under a Land Settlement Scheme with funds supplied by the Imperial Government for the settlement of the peasantry, whose condition has been thereby greatly improved."

In Barbados the recent action of some private individuals in selling agricultural land to the peasantry appears to have aroused such keen opposition in influential quarters as to have obliged the editor of a local newspaper to advocate a legal right, which would pass unquestioned in any other country, in the following terms:<sup>2</sup> "Estate owners must be at liberty to sell their estates as they think fit, and the peasantry must have the same liberty to purchase them, assuming they are able to do so." Even this slight concession towards the ownership of land has already had a beneficial effect, thus described by a resident: "It tends to make them (the peasants) more law-abiding, they being part owners of the country." If small homesteads were allotted to those who were willing and able to pay an equitable price the result would be to raise the condition of the buyers. The peasant proprietor is not as likely to be a "rough nigger" as the knock-about labourer.

<sup>1</sup> The *Times*, September 21, 1912.

<sup>2</sup> The *Weekly Illustrated Paper*, Barbados, August 31, 1912.



Thus the conditions existing in anglicized and densely populated Barbados have favoured the formation of a type of negro better or worse than that in the creole islands, according to the requirements of the case. If the object be to find a smart and efficient man, capable of being utilized in organized labour, the Barbadian takes the lead easily, and is thus largely represented among gangs of labourers recruited for abroad, as well as among the West Indian soldiers and police, where the very nature of such employments ensures the strict discipline necessary to repress the aggressive qualities already described. If, on the other hand, the object be to find a man suitable for immediate and close contact with his employer, the creole negro would be preferable, as not requiring to be kept in order by rigorous measures. Any white man, however, would be somewhat deficient in personal qualities if he could not in the course of time make himself respected, even by the black Barbadian, who, notwithstanding that his manners have been unfavourably affected by British contact, remains a true negro, capable of an unreasoning fidelity, as in the following case, where it caused the destruction of its recipient :—

A white man in Barbados was living apart from his wife in consequence of some domestic disagreement. He had, however, endeavoured to conciliate her and now sent his black servant with a present of some delicacy and a letter in which he entreated her to eat all the food herself, as it was very good. The woman did so, and was shortly afterwards found dead from the effects of poisoning, with the incriminating letter beside her. So strong did the circumstantial evidence appear that the husband was tried for murder and found guilty. On being asked if he had anything to say in his favour before sentence was passed, the unfortunate man rose equal to the occasion and, turning to the jury, addressed them as follows : "Gentlemen of the jury, you have tried my case with great care, and if I were in your position I should have come to the same conclusion—but I die innocent."

Many years after the sentence had been carried out the servant confessed on his death-bed that, unknown to anyone else, he had put poison into the food with the object of setting his master free from an unhappy marriage.

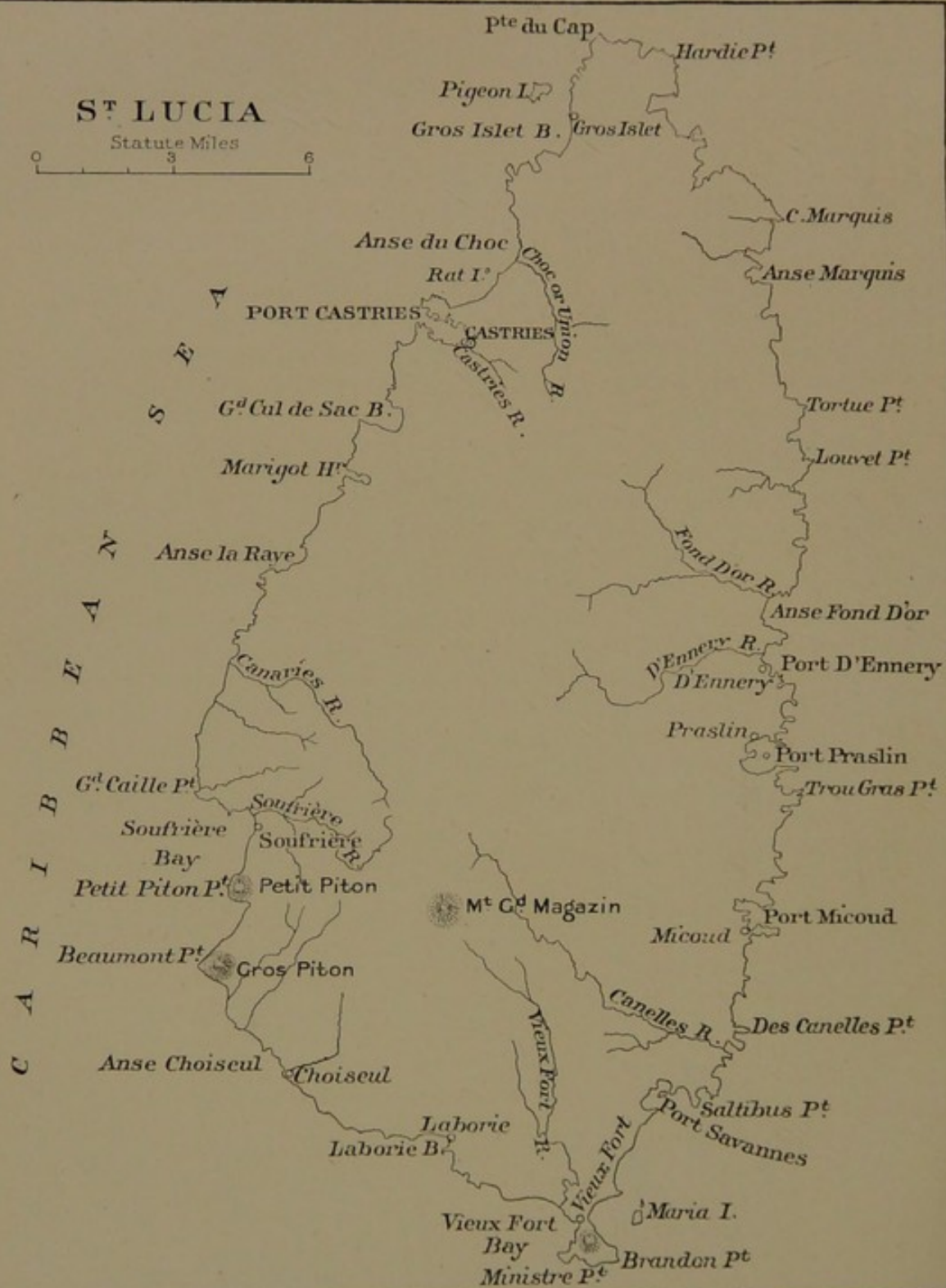
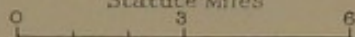






# ST LUCIA

Statute Miles





## CHAPTER XIII.

## IN ST. LUCIA.

**M**Y first visit to St. Lucia was made in little more than six months after leaving Grand Cayman. The time of year was most unfavourable, being in the month of July, at which period the wet season has commenced in the West Indies; it may, however, be remembered that I was on my way to Europe, and was obliged to avail myself of this occasion without knowing whether I should ever be able to return. I had been prevented from going to Martinique by an epidemic in Trinidad, owing to which a vigorous seclusion would have been required from passengers arriving from any of the British islands where only a quarantine of observation is enforced.

There are frequent means of communication between Barbados and St. Lucia, the best being by the Danish Line of steamers, whose moderately-priced first class costs one pound. A good schooner, however, was just about to leave, so taking a minimum of baggage and leaving the rest in Barbados, I embarked in the "Estelle," one of the fastest ships in these parts, paying three dollars, as twelve shillings and sixpence are here called, for my fare. The weather, apparently calm at sundown when we left Bridgetown under shelter of the leeward shore, soon became so rough that the waves began to sweep the deck of the little craft, which appeared to be heavily laden. Fortunately for myself the accommodation below was much better than is usually the case on these small schooners, so that after a little discomfort I was able to go to sleep. The wind, generally favourable for a westerly direction, enabled us to make the passage between Bridgetown and Castries, some hundred and ten miles, in about ten hours, a feat of which the captain was justly proud, for we had beaten a steamer on the same course.

On entering the harbour the hilly headland to the left, called Vigie, is very noticeable. Here are situated several large deserted-looking buildings, more like ruins than recently erected barracks, abandoned before thorough completion owing to that change in British policy which leaves most of its West Indian possessions without visible signs of ownership, except the flag. Castries, the capital of St. Lucia, lies at the inner extremity of this long and comparatively narrow inlet, the scenery of which is one of the prettiest in the West Indies, without, however, being able to compare with that of St. George, in Grenada. The town, consisting chiefly of ordinary wooden buildings, nestles close to the water's edge at the foot of the rising ground and is dominated at the back by picturesque-looking hills thickly clad with the verdure of tropical foliage; while the depth of the water, allowing steamers to be moored close to the wharf, confers a further



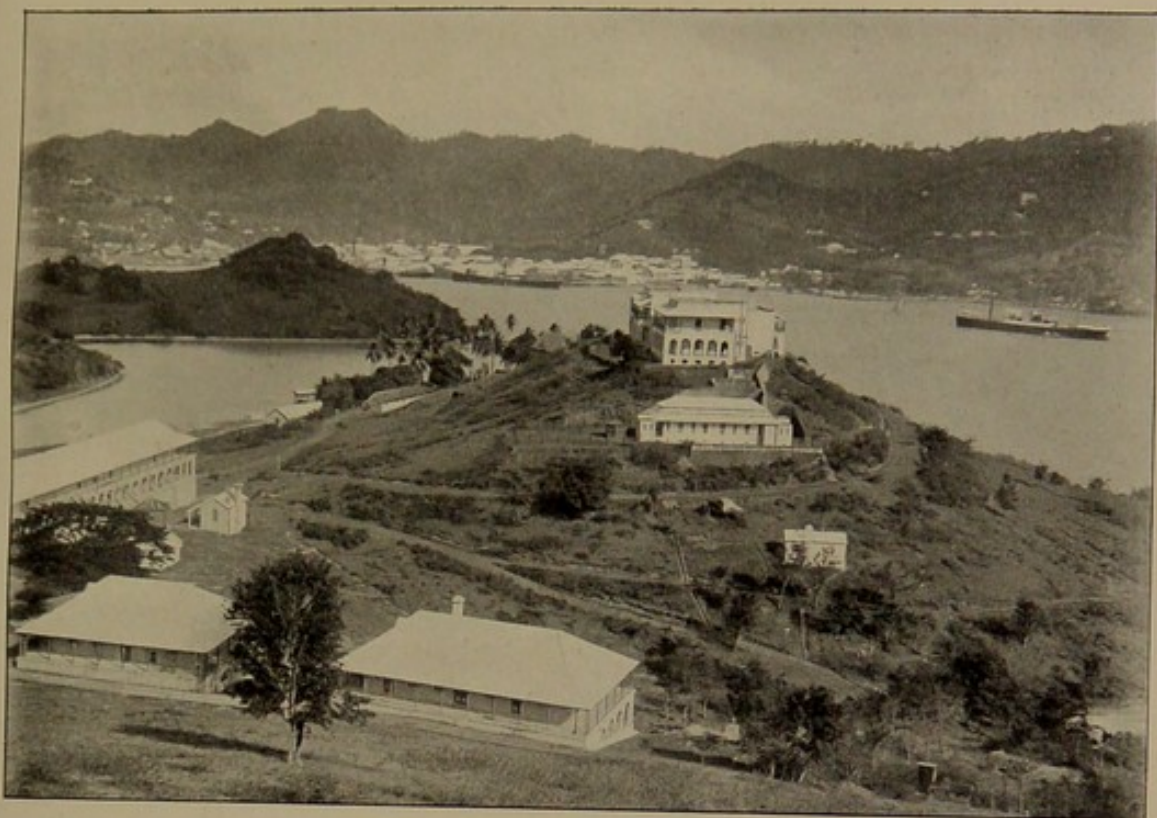
advantage on this sheltered harbour, which has thus become a coaling station. The wages of the coal-workers, who are principally, but not exclusively, women, are much higher here than in Barbados, being paid according to the number of loads carried, so that as much as three shillings can be earned in the day. The work, however, is strenuous, the basket loads carried on the head being said to weigh more than fifty pounds, besides which the weight has to be carried up or down a steep incline.

Not many months before my arrival there had been riots connected with the labour question, when the police, whose whole force did not amount to seventy men, were so outnumbered that they could barely protect themselves, with the result that Castries was temporarily given up to mob rule. Some of these fiery spirits wished to burn the town, which was only saved by the judicious advice of a person who would prove invaluable in the control of lunatics, inebriates, and other unstable-minded people. "If," he said, "you burn the town you will only injure poor people like yourselves, who will lose all they have, while you will be putting money into the pockets of the rich who have all their property insured." "Then we won't put money into the pockets of the rich," shouted the mob, and burning became unpopular. The police, chiefly dark-coloured, as in Barbados, are a fine-looking body of men, although not representative of St. Lucia, only a small proportion being natives of the Island.

On landing I had considerable difficulty in finding a suitable lodging, eventually going to a private house, where the family were so kind that we have remained on terms of friendship ever since.

St. Lucia presents a great contrast to Barbados in most respects, for while the latter boasts of being the most English, the former is certainly one of the most French of the British West Indies. In this respect it rivals Dominica, both of which have clung tenaciously to the language and customs of their former owners, owing in great measure to the neighbourhood of Martinique, which lies between them and is only separated from their shores by between twenty and thirty miles of sea. In the troubled periods of the wars between England and France, St. Lucia changed its nationality several times in the hotly contested battles fought in the hills above Castries; the Island, however, has been so long under French rule that the people are only slowly adapting themselves to the new conditions. This change, however, is taking place chiefly in Castries, where English is, of course, the official language, besides being spoken in the larger stores and business places, although even in the capital most of the poorer coloured and black people talk to each other in French *patois*, which they prefer to English, while in the country parts the *patois* is almost universally used. And in like manner with the dress of the people. Most of the older women still wear the bright-coloured dresses and kerchiefs with the points standing up, as in Martinique, although many of the younger ones have discarded these for ordinary colours and straw hats. As, however, the old style is more picturesque it is likely to last for a long time. The French-speaking negro here compares by no means unfavourably with the one who speaks English, and in some respects he certainly has the advantage. He neither begs nor attempts to be familiar, often touching his hat politely as he passes





Castries, showing the abandoned Barracks at Vigie in the Foreground.



Women discharging Coal from Steamer.





Roman Catholic Cathedral at the Corner of La Place.



Mrs. Griffiths' Cottage at Ti Rocher.



you on a country road, while the tendency of the Jamaican and the Barbadian in the opposite direction has already been noticed.

There is, however, another important contrast between St. Lucia and Barbados, irrespective of national customs. The former has the characteristics of a new country while the latter has those of an old one, a rather remarkable difference between two islands within a few hours' steam of each other. Thus St. Lucia, with a larger area than Barbados, has only about fifty thousand inhabitants, little more than a quarter of the population of the latter Island. In Barbados, although prices have fallen considerably since the decline of the sugar industry, land is still extremely hard to obtain. Indeed, as practically the whole of the available ground is under cultivation, it would be impossible to buy any considerable extent of country land which did not belong to an already existing plantation, while in St. Lucia there is a large extent of Crown land which has never been alienated or developed, awaiting the hand of man to cultivate it.

Castries, with the twofold advantage of being the capital and having an excellent harbour, is, of course, the commercial centre, where some of the business houses show considerable signs of activity, although the town has generally a quiet and somewhat decayed appearance, contrasting strongly in this respect with its neighbour in Barbados. There has, indeed, been a considerable decrease in its population, which might not now amount to more than seven or eight thousand. At the corner of La Place, as the central park is called, is situated the handsome stone building of the Roman Catholic cathedral, which is largely attended, as representing the religious belief of most of the people. In the suburbs the pretty botanical garden is a valuable means, in conjunction with the Experiment Station four miles outside, of imparting agricultural knowledge to settlers and of supplying young fruit trees at low prices. The views in the vicinity of the town are decidedly fine, whether on the headland already described, called Vigie, or on the opposite side of the harbour, where the residence of the Administrator is situated; but the hills, or *mornes* as they are called, at the back of the town, are the places whence the best panorama can be obtained.

On my first visit, however, the rain was so incessant that it was out of the question to take very long walks in this wooded and mountainous Island, which has a much more humid climate than its comparatively flat and bare neighbour. The most interesting of these short expeditions was to a place called Ti<sup>1</sup> Rocher, about two miles from town. On approaching this locality with my guide, an intelligent English-speaking lad, we saw a cottage surrounded by foliage so typical of the West Indies that I wanted to photograph it. In order to do so to advantage it was necessary to make friends with its owner, Mrs. Griffiths, who is here introduced to the reader. The cause of so British a name for a French-speaking negress will be explained by stating that the old lady was the widow of a Barbadian soldier in the West Indian regiment. She had accompanied her husband, a sergeant, to the other islands and to British Honduras, so she had plenty to say about her travels. He had been about twenty years

<sup>1</sup> Creole abbreviation of *petit*.



in the army, and when he retired with a pension they returned to St. Lucia, her native Island, where he entered the police, serving in it about nine years, and if he had lived a year longer she would have been entitled to a police pension. Mrs. Griffiths informed me in a most friendly manner that she knew how to treat white people and was not like the ignorant negroes who had never travelled. She spoke English without any foreign accent, although she conversed in *patois* with the children, who were probably ignorant of any other language. The only inhabitants of her cottage appeared to be herself and the younger members of her family, but she got two men from a neighbouring place to join the group before the photograph was taken. One of these, a coloured man, was a very good type of a St. Lucian peasant whom I was glad to have, for in the West Indies there is generally a scarcity of men on such occasions, chiefly because they are often absent at work. The rocky hill which gives its name to the place (Ti Rocher) stands up behind the cottage, although it could not be included in the view.

This photograph has a history. I had sent Mrs. Griffiths a copy of it, according to promise, and on calling at St. Lucia the following year, on my way from Martinique to Barbados, I found that the picture had been transformed into a postcard, having been sent all the way to Germany for that purpose, not, however, by the black lady. After sheltering in this friendly cottage until a heavy storm had passed we started on the return journey, when I saw someone carrying a small branch which was bearing a large brown fruit quite unknown to me, and on asking my guide what its name was, he replied, "The French-speaking people call it *pomme damou* (*d'amour*), but those who speak English call it mammy apple."

In St. Lucia, as in many other West Indian islands, the capital lies on the leeward side, where a good deal of water traffic takes place owing to the hilly and impracticable nature of the interior. Steamers ply constantly between Castries in the north-west and Vieux Fort in the extreme south, and of all the intermediate ports of call Soufrière is the principal, being in fact easily the second town in the Island. As the constant rain made walking impossible I visited this place in the steamer, which left me here in the afternoon on its way to Vieux Fort, and was due early on the next morning on the return journey to Castries.

Soufrière harbour is decidedly pretty, the scenery being set off by two huge peaks to its south, called the Pitons, a name generally given in the French-speaking islands to any sugarloaf mountain. One of these rises almost perpendicularly from the coast and looks most imposing, although under three thousand feet in height. The name of this place, like many others in the West Indies, is derived from some springs of sulphurous water which I would have visited only for having been too occupied in search of a good view during the few hours at my disposal before the return of the steamer. In the town itself the most noticeable building is the fine Roman Catholic church, nearly all the houses being of the ordinary wooden description. On presenting myself at a place with so English a name as the Star Hotel, where I had been told that accommodation for the night could be obtained, I was rather surprised to find that the



landlady, a light-coloured woman, could not speak English or else would not try to do so. Fortunately, she was a woman of some education and spoke intelligible French, else I should have had to find an interpreter.

My adventures were now cut short by the wet season, which would last until towards the close of the year, so I took the first opportunity of returning to Europe, and after settling the business which required my presence, found myself at liberty to continue my travels in the West Indies. Shortly before the publication of this book I again visited St. Lucia, where the following incidents are here related so as to form a continuous narrative with the preceding.

On this occasion I had come from Barbados in one of the steamers of that good Danish Line so popular among British passengers. The object of my visit, however, was entirely different to what it had been on the former occasion, the beauties of Nature now taking a subordinate place to my desire to buy a few acres in this Island where land is cheap and fertile. I did not propose to become a resident myself, intending to put someone in charge of my small purchase with a view to making a good investment for others and myself at the same time. St. Lucia has been rather before the public in this respect, most people connected with the West Indies being aware that Crown lands have been here thrown open for sale at the price of one pound per acre, an offer which attracts the attention of those who know that in many of the other islands such inducement is non-existent, or at any rate less, either from the absence of Crown lands or their relatively higher prices. These prices are regulated by the Governments and may thus vary from time to time, being at present fixed at £2 10s. per acre in Trinidad.

The time of year was not unfavourable for seeing the country. It was the month of May, sufficiently late in the season to be uncomfortably hot for walking, but early enough to avoid the summer rains. Indeed, there had been a long drought, so I should have the advantage of seeing the country at its worst, a very desirable feature from a buyer's point of view. After a consultation with my friends in Castries I became aware that it was by no means necessary to buy land directly from the Crown, and that perhaps an equally good bargain might be obtained from private sources, in proof of which I was shown an advertisement in the local newspaper, stating that a small cocoa estate was for sale near Dennery, one of the principal settlements on the other side of the Island, and I was urged to take advantage of the present opportunity for being conveyed to the spot by the steamer which had just brought me on its way round the Island for cargo. The windward side of St. Lucia is, indeed, very isolated from the capital, partly owing to the mountainous nature of the interior and partly because, with the exception of the Danish Line, no steamers call at its ports, the only other way of conveying produce to Castries being by the somewhat vaguely defined means of "occasional sloops." It might astonish a newcomer to find that the only steamers to take produce from this side of a British island were Danish, although residents look on such occurrences as a matter of course.

The immediate prospect of two or three days' discomfort in a remote place, where there might be difficulty in obtaining food or



lodging, was not altogether pleasant ; there was, however, no doubt about the soundness of the advice, so I returned to the steamer which left Castries that night and, after rounding the northern coast of the Island, put in at Port Dennerly on the following morning. We anchored in the little bay, whose rather bleak aspect is typical of the windward coast, and before long the captain courteously brought me ashore in his boat with all my belongings, a tiny handbag and a waterproof.

Here was an adventure in search of land which bore a far-off resemblance to old colonial days. True, I was on foot instead of on horseback, being in search of agricultural land for cocoa trees and not for grazing ground, but there were a few common requisites in both cases which might aid me in default of previous experience in the former capacity. Water is indispensable when the value of the property will not warrant expensive tanks or sinkings ; broken, rocky ground cannot be desirable for cocoa any more than for cattle or horses ; thick scrub is a nuisance which causes domestic animals to stray and requires to be removed at a heavy cost before fruit trees can be planted ; proximity to a market, or at least good land- or water-carriage, is a great advantage ; and last, but not least, the price must not be too high to leave a margin for profit. This last item was the worst stumbling-block, as all prices are relative, and I had no former dealings in these parts to guide me, although I had been through some cocoa estates as a visitor.

With these reflections I wandered into the settlement, which consists of one long street, bounded on each side by little wooden houses, and stopped at a rather superior building to ask for information. When I mentioned my object, a guide was soon found who proved very efficient. He was a native of Antigua, an English-speaking coloured man, who appeared to have been a resident here for many years. Leaving my few belongings in one of the principal stores, we now went to see the little estate, which lay at a distance of about one mile from the settlement, along a good level track. It was fortunate, indeed, that my companion knew the place well, as the owner was in bad health and could not come with us.

The land was bounded on one side by a tiny rivulet, along the banks of which a fringe of cocoa trees, some sixty or seventy yards in width, had been planted. Outside this belt some attempt had been made at a slight clearing, on which stood a rather dilapidated little hut not fit for habitation ; beyond this, however, the scrub was fairly dense, stretching up to a hill which appeared to form the boundary on the other side. The size of the property was described as fifteen carrés, of which two carrés were planted with cocoa, and the price of the property was £200. The term carré as applied to land measurement is rather puzzling to strangers in these French-speaking islands. It has come to mean not a square in a general sense, but one with the dimensions of about three acres and one-fifth. The cost of rearing cocoa trees to a fairly good fruit-bearing age is estimated at £30 per acre.

According to these data the value of the property would stand thus :—



2 carrés of cocoa land	=	6½ acres, at £30 per acre	=	£192 0 0
13 " unimproved land	=	41½ " " "	=	41 12 0
				<hr/>
				£233 12 0

The hut could not be reckoned as worth anything, and there were no other improvements. Even so the property, according to these statistics, would have been well worth the price asked if it had not been for certain disadvantages which affected its value. Many of the cocoa trees were not of a fruit-bearing age, which cannot fairly be classed as such under at least six or seven years. Most of the uncultivated area was covered with scrub which would have to be removed before any use could be made of the land, and the inaccessible nature of the eastern coast, separated from the capital by a steep range, and only occasionally visited by foreign steamers, made it somewhat doubtful whether a stranger would endure the isolation, so I gradually came to the conclusion that the bargain was not sufficiently alluring.

We now returned to Dennery, where I had to make arrangements for passing the night, for although it was only twelve miles to Castries I knew by hearsay that the crossing of the central range was steep, and I did not wish to make the attempt in the darkness. The manager of the store where I had left my belongings was an educated black man, who behaved most kindly in showing me where I could procure food and in providing me at night with a resting-place, for which he would accept no payment.

My guide offered to put me on the right road in the morning, so we started early in a north-westerly direction for Castries, walking about two miles along a range of hills which stretches inland. These hills, like others on this windward coast, did not appear very productive, although below us on our right was a large fertile valley about a mile in width, entirely under sugarcane cultivation. We now descended into this cultivated area, crossing a bridge over a pretty little stream which my companion called L'Eau du Bosquet, and, after following the bed of the valley for about two more miles, came to the end of it and of the canefields. In St. Lucia, indeed, it may be said generally that sugarcane is now only grown in the more favourable situations, such as large extents of level ground, while the hilly districts, which were once under this cultivation in more prosperous times, have either fallen into disuse or else are occupied by other crops.

The ascent had become very perceptible before we reached the extreme end of the valley, where at a little wooden shanty I had a farewell drink with my guide, who had accompanied me rather more than four miles before turning homewards. In the first half mile of the ascent the road was not steep enough to be troublesome. It here ran through a native village to which a profusion of plantains and mangoes, partially concealing the cottages, imparted a decidedly picturesque appearance. When, however, I drew away into the heights above all signs of habitation and agriculture ceased, and the path, quite apart from its steepness, became most uncomfortable for walking, owing to the number of small broken stones strewn over its surface in a crude attempt at road-making, from which



the steep cuttings and declivities at the sides allowed no escape. While, indeed, the ascent was not so steep as the one which will be subsequently described in Dominica, the present journey was, perhaps, more tiring through not having the stimulus of the unusually wild accessories on that occasion, when the scenery was enhanced by large mountain streams and by that greater altitude which lifts the local surroundings out of the tropics into uplands covered with large ferns bathed in mountain mist. Forest trees and ferns were, indeed, visible on the uncultivated slopes of the dividing range which I was now traversing, but the general aspect was that of a wildness which did attain the degree of sublimity. There was no water of any kind until I reached what seemed to be the summit, where there was a small trickling pool, and by this time the heat of the day, combined with the steepness of the ascent, had caused most of my clothing to assume a most uncomfortable state of moisture. At present, however, it was almost impossible to dry myself, owing to the difficulty of exit from the cuttings or declivities of the road, along which a few energetic black countrywomen were passing, presumably on their way back from Castries.

After another two miles, however, when I was well on the descent towards the western coast, there was a small drainage cutting on the lower side of the track, through which I descended among the bushes, where I took off my shirt and wrung it well out before hanging it up to dry on the branch of a shrub. This was soon accomplished under the burning sun, and after a short rest at this place, which I called Half-hour Camp, I pursued the journey considerably refreshed. It was now easy travelling, being downhill nearly all the way. The sea was within sight in front, while to my left was a large valley under sugarcane, the counterpart of the one on the opposite side of the range. This valley commenced between the hills about three or four miles back from the coast, and ran into the sea at an inlet which corresponds on the map to Cul-de-sac Bay, about four miles south of Castries. Cottages now occasionally made their appearance, together with small areas of cultivation, although, as on the other side, there was no sugarcane except in the large valley. The road, however, hugged the hills to the last, so that I did not come out on comparatively level ground before reaching the outskirts of the town, where I arrived towards midday.

Interesting as this expedition had been as a means of becoming acquainted with the Island, it had been comparatively useless for my purpose, so I now prepared to inspect a few small places which were for sale nearer Castries. My friends provided me with a guide, an old coolie who was well acquainted with the hills at the back of the town where these homesteads were situated. There are, indeed, a few East Indians still in St. Lucia, presumably the remains of those who were indentured in more prosperous times and who have now settled in the Island. This man could only speak a limited amount of pidgin-English, so the particulars of the journey in which he was to be my guide were arranged between him and my friend in a most barbarous mixture of *patois* and Hindustani, which can be asserted with confidence to be the most bewildering form of speech to an ordinary European. Unmixed *patois* can be occasionally understood from its



similarity to French, and the native will understand a good deal of French in return, but when an Oriental only speaks *patois* in a pidgin form as an acquired language the difficulties are enormously increased. The coolie, however, behaved in a thoroughly systematic and trustworthy manner. Having provided himself with a policeman's old helmet and a large leather pouch slung over his shoulder by means of a broad strap, as if to give himself an official appearance, he now led the way up the Morne du Don, a steep hill which rises behind the town. We might have travelled two miles along the winding path, from which little homesteads were seen at intervals, when we turned off by a track towards the left and in a few hundred yards arrived at the object of our quest.

This homestead consisted of three carrés, or nearly ten acres of land, on which stood a small substantial wooden house, about seven yards by four, without any other improvements except a few patches of cultivation where ordinary vegetables, such as cassava and sweet potatoes, were growing. The house stood upon a central rise, from which the ground descended somewhat abruptly into a ravine on either side. None of this land could fairly be called cultivated, for although there were a very few coco-nut and bread-fruit trees in places, there had been no system in planting them and the whole surface of the ground was covered with grass, shrubs and weeds. If a fine view were the chief requirement the position was not a bad one, being on a hill of considerable height, overlooking the sea and not a mile in a straight line from Castries; if, however, facility of access were desired it would be better to live four miles away on level ground, the hilly road being so impassable for wheeled traffic that supplies or produce would have to be carried on the backs of beasts of burden. On asking from what source the supply of water was obtained I was told that there was plenty at the bottom of the ravine, which was partially concealed by the scrub. Water is such an important requisite that I went down the somewhat steep descent to satisfy myself, and found that there was, indeed, a little trickling rivulet in the gully between the hills. While looking at it, however, two black men who were passing told me that the property in question did not reach quite so far, news which was most detrimental to the value of the land; for, while I was assured that no objection would be made to using the water, everyone who has had experience in the colonies knows that permissions of this kind only hold good while you are on cordial terms with your neighbour, and that if unfortunately any difference of opinion should arise your stock will immediately be discovered to do great damage.

This little property was offered at the exorbitant figure of £100, of which amount, even at a liberal estimate, the house could hardly be considered as worth one-half, leaving about £5 per acre as the price of the unimproved land. After speaking, however, to the owners of neighbouring places who had also a few acres for sale, I became aware that it is customary to ask for high prices which are never likely to be realized, the procedure of a proprietor of this kind being somewhat as follows: He puts up a substantial little wooden house, in which he may or may not reside, but instead of improving the value of his land by planting fruit trees he prefers to work in the town or



elsewhere for wages. When, however, after a lapse of years he wishes to sell, he considers that his property should have greatly increased in value, forgetting that time adds nothing to the value of unimproved agricultural land, while it detracts appreciably from the value of a wooden building. Nor in this instance was there much hope of enjoying any so-called unearned increment, as the population of Castries is on the decrease, and while land reformers are often keen on taxing an increment they seldom or never subsidize a decrement.

After spending about two hours between this and an adjoining place I came to the conclusion that the prices were prohibitive and that the land, although by no means barren, was too broken and hilly to be favourable for agriculture. It was hardly a walk of fifteen minutes from here to where the road crosses the summit of the *morne* and we now descended on the northern or further side from Castries on our way to Union Valley. Here the country was more level, and it seemed possible that with care a payable plantation might be made, although there is a general tendency among the small landholders to devote their attention elsewhere, and to neglect their little estates which produce far more scrub than trees of any value.

At the mouth of the Union Valley, about four miles north of Castries, lies the Experiment Station of the Department of Agriculture, where I rested a short time and had an interesting conversation about land and its cultivation with the assistant in charge. It is so often necessary to criticize the Governmental machinery of the West Indies that it becomes all the more pleasant to be able to praise a branch which does good service in many ways, whether by experimental and verbal teaching or by supplying young plants at low prices, making the settler feel that he has an experienced friend whom he can consult. Indeed, after seeing so many homesteads almost devoid of agriculture, the contrast offered by the clean and systematic methods employed here was quite refreshing. About a mile from the Experiment Station and three miles from town is the racecourse, which we passed on our southerly way back along the level sea-front.

The somewhat indifferent result which had attended my efforts made me now more determined to find out what the Crown lands were really like. There is still a good deal of this unalienated ground left, although it naturally lies in rather remote places, the first comers having already selected what was more easy of access. In order to know where it was situated I went to the Crown Lands Office in Castries, where all such ground is painted in a distinctive colour on the map. Most of it lay among the hilly country towards the central range, a small amount stretched towards the eastern side, but to the best of my recollection there was none left anywhere near the western coast, which, of course, is the more desirable situation, owing to frequent access to the capital by steamer, and being better sheltered from that wind which, however refreshing to Europeans, does not agree so well with tropical agriculture.

A good many of these Crown lands could be most easily reached from the extreme south of the Island, partly from comparative proximity, and partly because the chains of hills tend to run north and south, so that by walking in a similar direction many transverse ranges can be avoided, besides which St. Lucia, like Barbados



is much broader and therefore contains more land in its southern than in its northern extremity. Some of these lands, which went by the name of de Mailly, extended to within six or seven miles of Vieux Fort, the most southerly port, and on them was situated a Government rest-house, in which lived a Crown ranger, whose business it was to show the ground to intending purchasers. The expedition would take some two or three days and, although anything in excess of the barest necessities would be troublesome on a walking expedition, I could not resist taking the camera, in addition to my waterproof and a little handbag.

Before starting in the steamer for Vieux Fort I had ascertained that accommodation could be obtained in that place, and now went on board in light travelling order prepared for the adventure.



## CHAPTER XIV.

## IN ST. LUCIA.

**I**N fine weather a trip in a steamer on the leeward side of a West Indian island combines many requisites for making the journey pleasant and instructive, owing to the calmness of the water and the vicinity of the shore, which enables a good deal of the coast country to be seen in an agreeably passive manner, while the frequency of the ports of call and the frequent changing of the passengers give a facility for studying the people. The total distance between Castries and Vieux Fort can hardly amount to twenty miles in a straight line, although by following the curve of this sheltered coast, generally speaking more green and fertile-looking than that on the windward side, considerably more than thirty miles have to be traversed by the steamer between these two places.

After more than one hundred years of continuous British possession all the names of the ports at which we stopped are still French. The first of these was Canaries, where we only stood out at sea so that a boat might take ashore whatever was required to land there, while the other settlements, being evidently of more importance, had their wooden piers, alongside of which the steamer was moored. The next place was the already mentioned port of Soufrière, which is certainly the principal of all these coast towns. Between it and Choiseul we passed the two huge peaks known as the Pitons, while Choiseul itself deserves a word of mention, if only for the pretty appearance of this little settlement which nestles among its coco-nut palms under the steep ascent behind it. Up to here, with the exception of a few flats on the water's edge, most of the coast line had been abrupt, with hills and mountains at the back, but between Choiseul and Laborie the character of the country becomes comparatively flat, and the increasing motion of sea and steamer soon bore witness that the wind was now blowing over a comparatively narrow and level strip of land. From the low-lying slopes under cane cultivation near Laborie to Vieux Fort all was comparatively level, beyond which the southern extremity of the Island ends in an abrupt headland, which probably plays an important part in sheltering Vieux Fort Bay.

Arriving shortly before sundown I lost no time in inquiring where I could lodge, and was directed to a two-storied wooden building in the little town, which has an old-fashioned creole appearance, as is only natural considering that nearly all the people are French-speaking. The ladies of the house had a very British name, although they could either speak no English, or, as I was afterwards informed, did not want to make the attempt, one of them saying in French by way



of explanation, "Papa died when I was quite little and mamma was Catholic," evidently taking Catholic and French as synonymous terms. They were educated white people, however, who could speak their language correctly and did their best to make me comfortable.

I was now apprehensive that I might be delayed in the morning through not being able to find a guide to show me the way to the Crown lands, so after supper I strolled towards the police-station to see if the man in charge could recommend me anyone, and entered into conversation with two black policemen, who, to judge from their good English, were probably Barbadians, with the result that a young man came up to offer his services. He was, however, only able to speak in his native *patois*, which made me doubtful whether we should be able to understand each other. Presently an English-speaking negro appeared, whom I engaged at once, the price of his services being arranged at three shillings and sixpence for the whole of the following day and that part of the next which might lapse before our return. Not having the slightest idea whether we should be able to obtain any food where we were going, I arranged with my hostess to provide me with hard-boiled eggs and bread for the journey, together with some coffee and sugar. These were packed in a little basket, and, to make our loads lighter, I left my bag behind, taking the camera instead on the chance of finding something interesting.

We started at seven in the morning, our direction being almost due north up the valley of the Vieux Fort River. Here probably lies the greatest extent of level ground in this mountainous Island, where we travelled through about four miles of comparatively flat country, almost all under cane cultivation, passing near the plantation houses of two of these estates. In these French-speaking parts much confusion is caused by describing places otherwise than by their official designations; thus most of the names used by my guide were not recognized in more influential quarters. After walking for about four miles parallel to the Vieux Fort River, which my guide called the Félicité River, we came to the foot of the hills which bound the valley. The road here crosses the river, which had quite enough water to oblige me to take my boots off, although there were large stones at intervals on which the barefoot peasants generally manage to cross.

We now ascended a ravine between the hills where the aspect of the country changes entirely. We had come to the end of the large sugarcane plantations and, in the broken ground at the sides of the somewhat steep ascent, the cottages of the peasants appeared at intervals, while some industrious women might occasionally be seen hoeing in some comparatively level patch of agriculture. Nowhere, however, in St. Lucia is the traveller molested by that combination of familiarity and begging so prevalent in the anglicized islands. A few fruit trees, such as mangoes and plantains, were growing near some of the cottages, although by far the greater part of this hillside country was in a state of nature, by no means barren, being clad in the verdure which trees, shrubs and grass impart. In spite of the windings of the road in its ascent of the ravine, the path was so steep in places that wheeled traffic is not likely to be used unless more money is spent than would be warranted under present conditions. After about a mile and a half of ascents and descents, of which the



former predominated, we again crossed the rocky and swiftly flowing Vieux Fort River, and in another mile we turned off the main road by a little track to the right which brought us in a few hundred yards to the Government rest-house, which had a somewhat deserted appearance in the solitude of the surrounding bush. We had not made very good headway, having taken two hours and a half to walk between six and seven miles, but the hills of the latter part of the journey were so steep that a good average could not be kept up.

It was very annoying to find that the Crown ranger who lives in this rest-house, a small wooden building of the superior cottage type, was away from home, and that the door was locked. At first the only resource seemed to be to wait here until his return. After some time, however, the delay became so unbearable that it was necessary to think of some other plan, when my guide informed me that his sister lived near and suggested that we should wait at her cottage, an alternative which was decidedly preferable to remaining at the door of a locked-up building, so we followed a track on the opposite side of the road for about half a mile until we came to the sister's dwelling, a rather nice homestead on the top of a sloping rise. The dwelling-house was very small, only consisting of two little rooms; the out-buildings, however, were neat, while the fruit trees and edible plants which surrounded the place imparted that look of picturesque comfort which cannot be otherwise acquired.

We now took our meal of bread and eggs, together with the coffee which my black hostess prepared, after which my guide made another unavailing attempt to find out where the ranger had gone. The prospect of having no shelter at night was rather serious, so I asked the guide if, in the event of the ranger not returning, we could stop at his sister's cottage. After a short consultation with her, he informed me that "the *madame*" could give me shelter, for, as she only spoke *patois*, my request had to be made through her brother. She seemed, however, very disposed to be obliging ever since I had made her friendship during the afternoon by photographing the homestead with herself, husband and family in front of it, when she became so pleased at seeing the image of the place on the mirror of the camera that she broke out into a kind of Jajú dance in token of approbation. Her husband, who could speak English, informed me that he was anxious to buy a small amount of land here, by which I inferred that they did not own much already, and perhaps this may account for the cultivation not extending further from the house.

Darkness had fallen while I was taking my supper, when word came most unexpectedly that the ranger had returned. There was no doubt that the rest-house was the proper place for passing the night, both on account of its greater space and the advantage which it offered for an earlier start in the morning, so I said good-bye to the kindly black "*madame*," who would hardly accept a present for her services. We now returned to the rest-house, where I made the acquaintance of the ranger, a young French-speaking coloured man, who also knew some English. On hearing my requirements it was arranged that we should go to the de Mailly Crown lands on the following morning, and in the meantime a canvas stretcher was provided for my use at night.



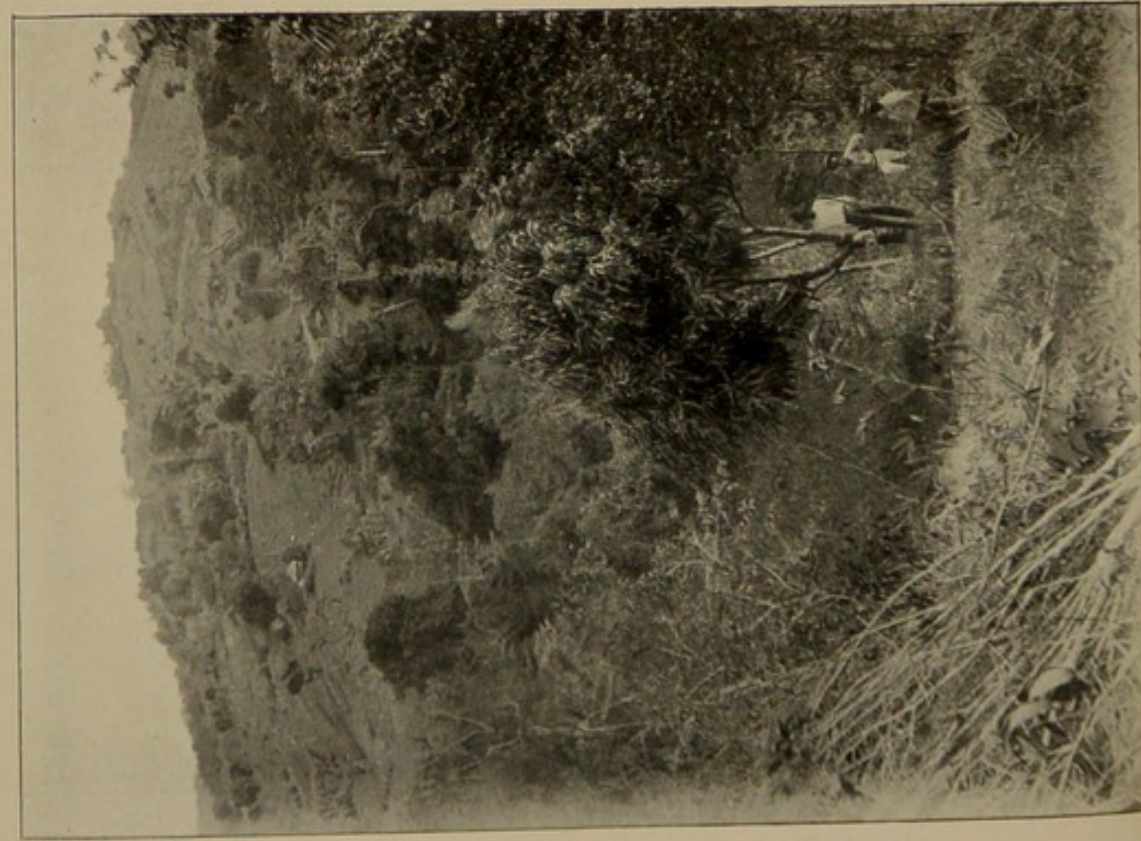


Soufriere Bay, with the Sugar-loaf Mountain called the "Petit Piton" in the distance.



Homestead and Family of the Black "Madame."





De Mally Crown Lands.



The Fashionable "Ti Jone" (petit jaune) Headdress.



In the morning it looked as if the ranger did not indulge in the luxury of tea or coffee, which can hardly be enjoyed without making a fire, so, not wishing to lose time, the guide and myself took our frugal repast with a little water before we went on our way to the Crown lands. The road appeared to be a mere continuation of the one on which we had travelled on the preceding day and very much of the same character, through wild hilly country, far from ideal for forming a plantation, although still fertile. We had probably travelled more than a mile in our winding course through the ravines when the ranger stopped at a hillside covered with fairly dense scrub and informed me that here were the "Mai" lands, clipping the word as is usual in *patois*. Although the view was far from a good subject for a photograph, and did not, besides, turn out very well, it is necessary to reproduce it here if only to give an idea of what these Crown lands were like.

The ranger informed me that the cutting through the scrub was to mark the boundary of the Crown lands, but unfortunately I do not recollect whether these lands stretched to its right or to its left.<sup>1</sup> As, however, the land and the scrub were of the description on both sides the view will give a fair idea in either case. The clearing, which was only some three or four yards wide, crossed the road somewhat transversely and ran down the hill into the ravine below. I ascended about twenty yards from the road through this opening in the scrub and pointed the camera straight down. The ranger appears with his hatchet under the mango tree at the edge of the road, and my guide in the cutting just below, the third man being merely a traveller who was passing. On the far side of the ravine is a steep hill on which a homestead is visible. There was, in fact, no other way of taking the view except from this line of clearing through the scrub, otherwise the foliage would have concealed everything.

We now went a few hundred yards further along the road to see the Cannelles River, which the ranger said ran through this ravine. It appeared to be similar in size and character to the upper part of the Vieux Fort River, a wild and picturesque mountain stream. On looking at the map afterwards the proximity of the Vieux Fort and the Cannelles rivers determined our position. We were in fact on the watershed between them, the former running due south and the latter south-easterly, and we might have been about eight miles from Vieux Fort by the road, although not quite so much in a straight line owing to the numerous windings in the broken country. By this time my ardour in the pursuit of land had somewhat abated, partly on account of the wild nature of the country and partly because our food had so nearly come to an end that it did not seem worth while to suffer any privation on so slight a chance of receiving a substantial recompense. The ranger also did not appear to be well acquainted with all the boundaries, so professing myself quite satisfied with what had been seen we returned to the rest-house to remove our few belongings before continuing the homeward journey.

At the end of the broken country, just before reaching the Vieux

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<sup>1</sup> Probably to the left, that being the direction in which we had come from the rest-house.



Fort plains, we passed the children of the black *madame* on their way to town. The little boy, who did not appear to be more than seven or eight years of age, was accompanying his elder sisters and really seemed too young for a journey of six or seven miles each way, especially in such hilly country. After following the road towards Vieux Fort about halfway through the canefields, we turned to the right for the purpose of going to Black Bay, near Laborie, the last port but one, where a person lived whose family I knew well in Barbados. Here I was hospitably invited to remain for the night, my bag was brought from Vieux Fort, about three miles distant, and I enjoyed a well-earned rest until the next morning, when I was driven to Laborie in time to catch the return steamer which brought me back to Castries after an absence of three days.

The reader will now expect that some opinion should be given as to the relative desirability of buying land from private sources or from the Crown, and whether the purchase of land generally in St. Lucia would be a good bargain. These questions must be answered with great diffidence by anyone who has had no experience as a planter, although a resident of many years in the tropics who has devoted some attention to this subject may be competent to say a few words.

In answer to the former question the balance of the evidence lies in favour of buying from private sources, and for these reasons. It is true that Crown lands would probably be cheaper in the first instance, but many of the best have already been sold, and most of those left lie in somewhat mountainous regions which are difficult of access for wheeled traffic, thereby making the import of necessities or the export of produce more costly. Much of this land also is covered with trees or scrub, which will have to be removed at the cost of several pounds an acre; while in the case of buying private land there would be a better chance of being able to settle nearer a market, which is a very important consideration for the small settler who cannot afford to wait many years until his main produce is ready, but must sell his so-called "catch crops," as quickly growing fruits and vegetables are called, at comparatively short intervals to defray current expenses. In a well-chosen place the ground would be at least partially cleared, thereby saving a subsequent expenditure of time and money. After all, on looking at the problem from its later stage, the original cost of the land does not make much difference as compared with its improved value, so it is important to buy land which is good and therefore capable of being highly developed. We are so accustomed to look at land from its artificial value that we forget how little it is worth before it has been improved, as the following example will show. Fifty acres of Crown land at £1 per acre. The price paid is £50. These lands are uncleared and probably far from market. Fifty acres of private land at £3 per acre. The price paid is £150. These lands should be partially cleared and are nearer market. Presuming both lands to be equal in quality, each of these investments will be worth £30 per acre, according to the estimated value of cocoa when the trees have reached a good fruit-bearing age, say in six or seven years. In other words, both properties will be worth £1,500, although the purchaser of the Crown lands will



have paid £100 less. In return, however, he has had extra expenses for six or seven years from having been farther away from market, and will always be at this disadvantage except in the unlikely event of a new town or port. He has also had to pay more money for clearing the land, and if he has not done this in time his estate will not bring in a return so soon.

In answer to the latter question, relative to the purchase of land generally in St. Lucia, all depends on the person. If the land were worked properly a fair living could be made out of a small estate. A settler, however, would have the continuous work of many years before him, as the uncultivated land would only attain its greatly improved value after much supervision and expense, during which the want of sufficient income from the property will prohibit any waste in the form of a prolonged absence. Thus it is essential that the person should be fond of agriculture and should be contented with an occupation from which only a moderate competence can be expected in return for a small investment. In the whole of the question about land, cocoa and not sugarcane has been the theme, because the latter, which is still the chief industry of the Island, is only suitable for capitalists and is now seldom seen except in the few large valleys. There is, of course, no room in a book of travels for those details about land settlement which can be found in the pamphlets issued by the Imperial Department of Agriculture for the West Indies. While therefore the conclusion to which we have arrived may not be as definite as the inquirer would wish, the advice given is at least such as the writer would be prepared to follow himself in buying suitable land from private sources at a payable price, and the question may here be asked, "What reason have you to expect to be able to buy land cheaper on a future occasion?" The answer to which is as follows. In a lightly populated Island like St. Lucia every white stranger is a somewhat marked person, and, when it becomes known that he wants to buy land, many owners of neglected properties will think that this is a good opportunity for selling to advantage by asking from the inexperienced or hasty newcomer a considerably higher price than a resident would pay. Owners of neglected properties, however, do not always have the buyer at a disadvantage. The very fact of a property being neglected is in favour of its transference to someone else, sooner or later. There are, indeed, such things as judicial or forced sales, when the buyer may expect to purchase at market value, but to do this he must be prepared to wait, perhaps several months, and on this occasion I was not able to remain in the Island for any considerable time.

A word must now be said with reference to the half-length photograph of the dark-coloured, although not black, woman, whose head-dress is of the most fashionable creole kind and could not be improved upon even in Martinique. As before mentioned, the chief difference between the styles in which kerchiefs are worn in the islands where English and French are spoken is that in the former the points hang down, while in the latter the points stand up. Both styles, however, are simple arrangements of a piece of cloth which can be rearranged and adjusted at pleasure. This special kind, how-



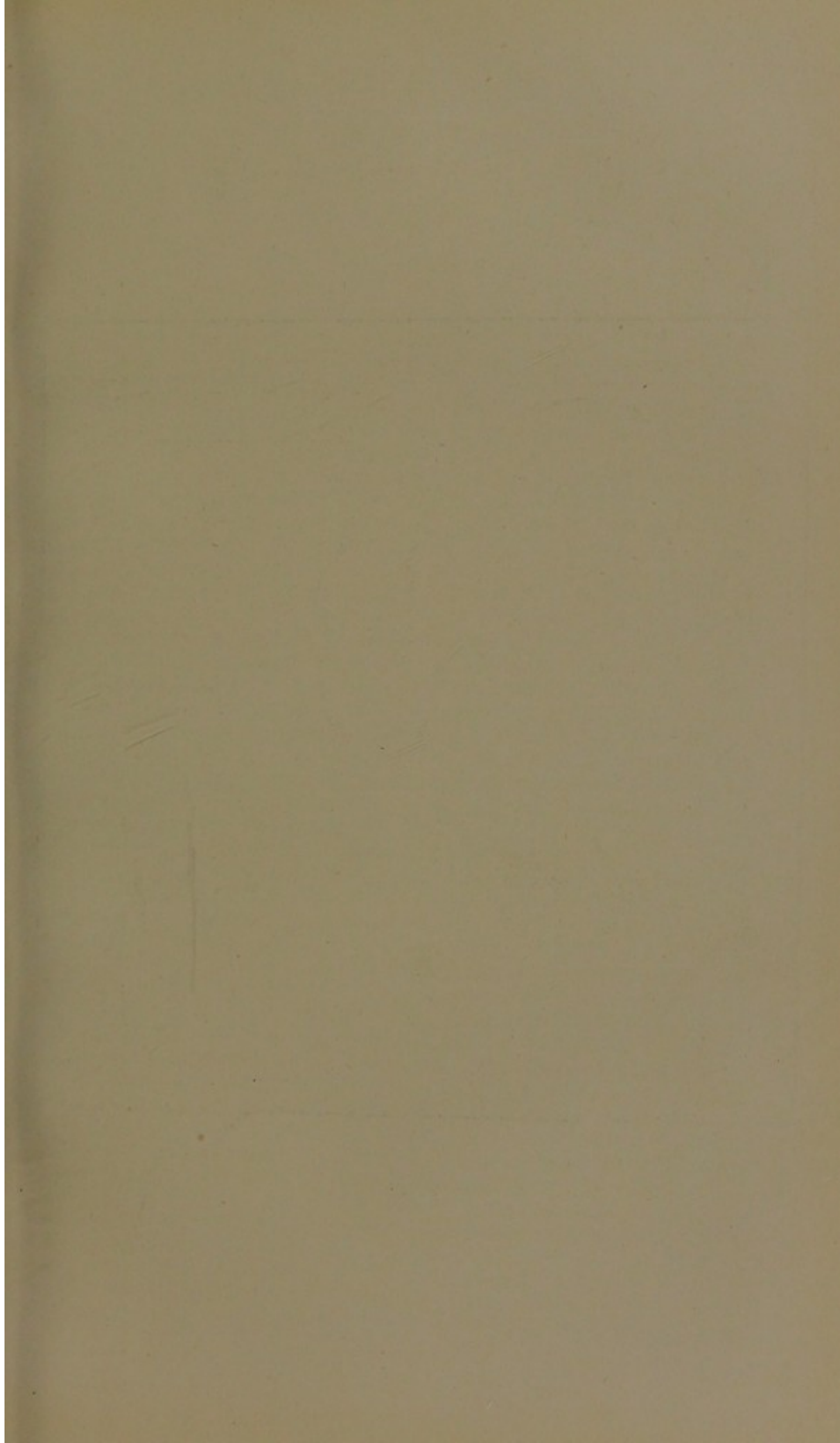
ever, is of a more elaborate construction, generally reserved for dressy occasions. The cloth destined to become the headdress is brought to a skilled person who artistically fashions the plaits after the most approved model. The structure is then oil-painted on the outside. This preserves the material from the wet, besides stiffening the folds and the point, which are thus prevented from falling out of shape. It has now become a kind of rigid cap which can no longer be undone with the fingers. Several colours are generally used, the prevailing one being yellow, with only a sufficiency of the others to form a contrast. The correspondingly bright dress is equally wonderful and will be better understood by referring to the full-length figure of the girl in Martinique.

Wishing now to return to my headquarters in Barbados, I found on making inquiries that the only immediate opportunity was by the Quebec Line. When I went to the office of that company to buy my ticket, the clerk most unexpectedly asked me the date of my last vaccination. This was a very unwarranted question, considering that there was no epidemic in either St. Lucia or Barbados at that time; realizing, however, that a Canadian line might be expected to follow the customs of the United States in insisting upon a list of particulars about an intending passenger, I replied that I had been vaccinated within the last seven years but could not remember the exact date. The clerk would not accept this as sufficient information, and a troublesome argument ensued until another clerk intervened with the advice that any period within seven years should be accepted, so my passage was eventually taken.

The short sea journey was soon completed, although it would have been most desirable if the thoughtful American, who had been my companion in the little compartment of the quarantine station at Havana, had been travelling with me. It may be remembered that he did not wish me to use the top berth because it might be injurious to myself. Now, however, I had no one to restrain any hazardous inclinations, which were all the more inexcusable considering that I was alone in the cabin and had an unrestricted choice. During the night I had slept peacefully in the top berth, forgetful of danger, but on descending in the morning, just before arriving at Barbados, I used the bar at the side of the berth in order to lower myself slowly. This bar, however, instead of being strong and rigid as is usually the case, was a hollow flexible tube which came out in my hand, with the consequence that I fell backwards, striking my head against the wall and landing on the floor in a somewhat dazed condition. My reflections in connection with this event were that companies, like individuals, when they require too much from others are likely to be deficient themselves.

I had, however, arrived as a first-class passenger, although with a damaged head, and was thus allowed to land without making declarations about my education, means and intentions, nor was I obliged to ransack my luggage in order to produce ten pounds in cash.

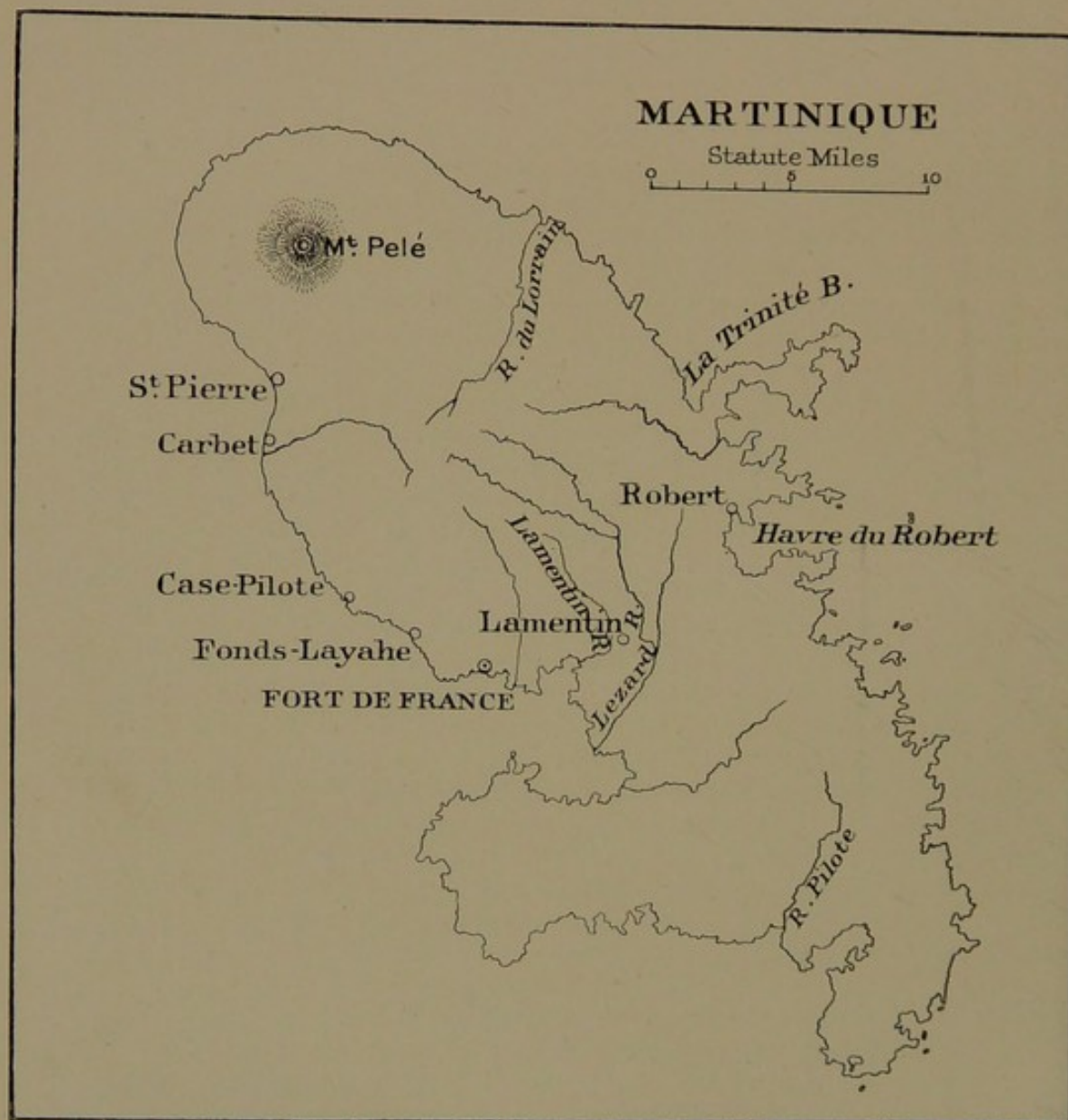
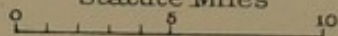






# MARTINIQUE

Statute Miles





## CHAPTER XV.

### IN MARTINIQUE.

THE captain of the schooner "Peerless" was such a conscientious man that when asked how much the fare from Bridgetown to Fort-de-France would cost, he replied that, having never taken any passengers there, he did not know what to charge, inquiring at the same time how much I had paid on a former occasion, so that he might be guided by current prices. I replied that this was my first voyage to Martinique, but that I had been charged twelve shillings and sixpence for a similar passage to St. Lucia, on which basis the captain estimated the present fare at fourteen shillings and sixpence, rightly considering that the slightly longer journey was worth an excess of two shillings.

We had left Bridgetown in the afternoon, and arrived at Fort-de-France on the following morning, after a slower but calmer passage than the previous one to St. Lucia. It was now necessary to speak French, which is more efficient here than in those British islands where *patois* is used, owing to a certain amount of familiarity with the official language acquired by the coloured and black people who have been to school or have lived with the educated classes. Thus many in Martinique who habitually use the *patois* can make themselves understood in very intelligible French.

The man who took my trunk from the boat complied faithfully with my request to be taken to a house where the charges were moderate by bringing me to a good little hotel in the Rue de la République, where I paid at first seven francs daily for board and lodging. When, however, the people of the house found that my requirements were not excessive, they reduced the tariff to six francs, and I quite agree with the remark of an acquaintance made here, "*Vous avez bien tombé.*" The family consisted of a father, mother, and son, who owned a very classic French name, and were light-coloured people who preferred to be called creole, a term which, strictly speaking, means the descendants of Europeans born in these parts, although largely used by those who have a tinge of non-European blood. The few inmates of this hotel were chiefly permanent boarders, and the table thus assumed rather the aspect of a private party. Besides the family of the house, there was a Frenchman who, according to my informant, called himself a Parisian without any just claim to such a distinction. This gentleman, however, was very civil to me, and would fall no lower in my estimation if he were proved to come from the south of France, as his dark European complexion seemed to attest. Occasionally we had a talkative man

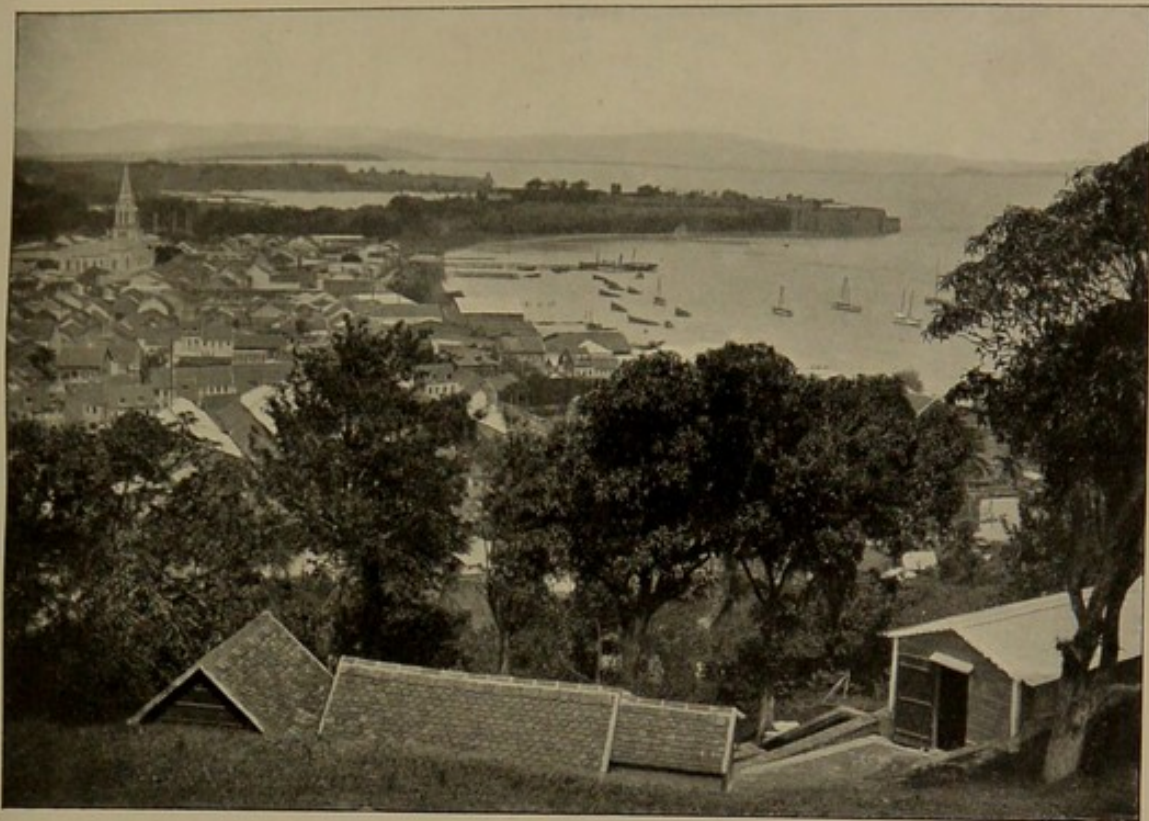


with a trace of colour who had evidently served in the army and was fond of relating his military experiences, such as how he had blown a kiss to a girl while he was on duty, causing the recipient of the favour to remark to her father, "Papa, the soldier has blown me a kiss." The language of the table was usually French, although part of the time a creole who could only speak *patois* sat near me. This young fellow was evidently very ignorant, and used to make remarks about me which I could only partially understand. I soon, however, discovered that he used to call me "*le Barbade*," evidently thinking that because I came from that island I must be a native of it.

Fort-de-France is a solidly-built town, contrasting favourably in this respect with any in the British islands. It is, however, deficient in water supply and in sanitary arrangements, being by all accounts far inferior to the unfortunate St. Pierre, which was destroyed by the volcanic irruption a few years previously. The river which forms one of its boundaries is crossed by a ferry, on the far side of which is a hill where I obtained a bird's-eye view. On the opposite side of the town is *la savane*, a large park where the people promenade in the afternoon and evening when the band plays. In a little square near the cathedral is a statue of the Empress Josephine, who was born in this Island. The market, however, is the place which presents most animation. Here congregate a large number of those brightly attired females, the colour and shape of whose dresses have gone far towards making visitors declare that the beauty of Martinique is pre-eminent in the West Indies. Far be it from me to detract from their charms, but, as has been remarked in a former chapter, these striking colours give them an unfair advantage over the women of the other islands. Nor does their stylish appearance depend alone on the vivid colours which at first attract attention, for on closer observation it will be found that the coloured female of Martinique has learnt a good deal of French art from her white countrywoman, and has contrived a fashion which is as exacting as in Paris, if less expensive. There are, of course, some details which are optional, and thus allow scope for individuality. Any young woman who aspired to be well dressed would wear on her head a kerchief of bright colours with the points standing up; but there is some latitude as to how these points should be arranged. The bright-coloured dress may have any combination of colours, the favourite being a blend of red and white with a large pattern, such as white flowers on a red background. The long skirt is looped up for walking, so as to show a certain amount of petticoat, the exigencies of which a man is not competent to describe, while the boots have a really French appearance, and cost a good deal, perhaps fifteen or twenty francs.

It must also be remembered that most of those really pretty Martinique types are not those of negresses, but of cross-breds, sometimes as light as quadroons in colour. Thus it is hardly fair to compare the black women of the other islands with those who are nearly white, as most of these light-coloured beauties prefer their creole dress to Parisian fashions, knowing that the former is much more effective while costing far less. A stranger, however, will find great difficulty in obtaining their consent to be photographed, when he will probably meet with either a refusal or a doubtful kind of





Bird's-eye view of Fort-de-France.



Market Place.





Mercédès, a Servant of the Hotel (in her Marketing Dress).



promise which is never realized. On asking the family of the hotel why this should be the case they replied that it was from an apprehension of appearing on post-cards, and this must be allowed to be a reasonable objection in the case of better class people who would not like their portraits to be sold in the place where they live. The subject of the photograph, one of the hotel servants, was not perhaps a beauty, but a fine-looking girl of a dark mulatto colour, and nearly as tall as myself, although only seventeen years of age. Of course, this style of dress cannot be kept up continuously owing to the damage which hard work would inflict on clothes and boots, so the housework of the earlier part of the day is done in a less showy costume and either barefoot or in slippers; towards the evening, however, or on going out at any time, an elaborate toilette takes place which is considered as necessary for the credit of the house as for that of the individual.

The people of all colours appeared so civil that I was surprised to hear that there had been a good deal of bad feeling between different sections of the community not long before my arrival, when the mayor was shot and his murderers had not yet been apprehended. My host once took me to the casino, when after waiting some time we were told that it would not be opened that night, as a disturbance was feared. The root of the trouble seemed to be the animosity of the darker people against those of the white race, as Monsieur Alexandre, the son of the house, told me that one of these discord makers had informed him that it was his duty to hate white people. "But how can I hate them?" he said naïvely. "My grandfather was a Frenchman."

My first expedition was to see the ruins of St. Pierre, whose tragic fate has invested it with a deep interest. The circumstances connected with its destruction are so well known that only a brief outline will be here attempted.

Mont Pelé, the volcano which lies on its northern side, had been in active eruption for some time previously, causing the frightened inhabitants to leave their homes for the purpose of taking refuge in Fort-de-France. The well-meaning but misguided official in command, fearing that the latter town would become excessively crowded, and not thinking that there was any real danger, obliged the unfortunate people to return, and paid for his mistake with his own life and those under his control. The summit of Mont Pelé is only a few miles distant from St. Pierre, the town lying practically at the foot of the volcano; thus, when the fatal outburst took place, the flames descended like a river of fire, killing everyone with the exception of one man imprisoned in the strongly built jail. The heat, however, had been so great that the skin was burnt underneath the prisoner's clothes. Of all the ships moored along the shore the only one which escaped was the steamer "Roddam," of the Scrutton Line, and this was only due to the fortunate accident of anchoring further out at sea than was usually the case. Some of the crew, however, were killed, although a half-burnt remnant, together with their captain, succeeded in navigating the ship and lived to tell the tale.

The most convenient way of seeing the ruins is by means of the coasting steamer which plies between Fort-de-France and Carbet,



a village about fourteen miles to the north of the capital, while St. Pierre itself lies about two miles beyond Carbet. The whole expedition, therefore, can be done easily in one day, as the steamer starts very early and makes two trips, the second of which does not return until towards nightfall. We only stopped at one intermediate port, a fishing village called Case-Pilote, rather more than half-way between the two places, arriving at Carbet late in the morning. My first business was to secure a guide, and thanks to a letter of introduction, I was soon provided with a big light-coloured lad who could speak French. Before we started my companion informed me that it was not necessary to walk, as canoes were always ready to take passengers from Carbet to St. Pierre. I had, however, already noticed that the prices here were considerably higher than in Fort-de-France, and apprehensive that my money might run short, decided that it would be better to reach our destination on foot, which was besides a much better way of seeing the country. During our two-mile walk the hills so nearly extended to the coast line that the track in places followed the sandy beach to the commencement of the ruins, through which a road runs parallel to the sea.

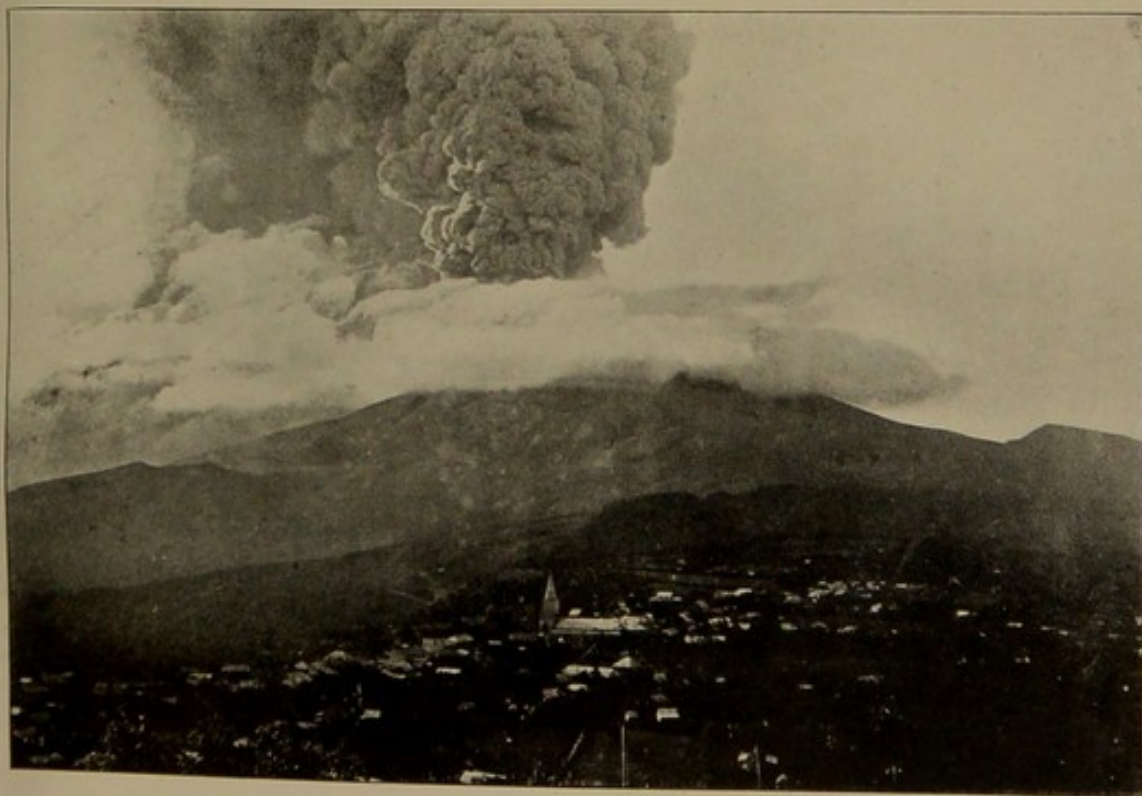
We were now in full view of the scene of desolation. In front of us lay more than a mile of the remains of the once prosperous town skirted to the left by the sea, from which we might have been only a few hundred yards distant. To our right were some rather barren-looking hills, while on the far side of the ruins began the gradual ascent of the bare and forbidding-looking volcano, whose considerable elevation of more than four thousand feet was partially concealed by a cloud, and whose western slopes extended to the coast. If one has never been over the ground before there is always some difficulty about choosing the best point of view; noticing, however, that the hills near the sea gave an advantage which appeared to be wanting further on, I determined to avail myself of the present occasion, the more so that if the cloud which now covered the summit of Mont Pelé were to extend down its slopes the principal feature in the scenery would be lost. In the centre of the road on the left stands the ruins of a drinking fountain, and there was not a living creature within sight except my guide, who seemed to impersonate the only survivor of the catastrophe.

It will be noticed in the picture that towards the further end of the ruins there is a small wooden pier stretching into the sea. Close to this place had been erected a small hotel or accommodation house, which seemed to enjoy a monopoly of custom from those who visited these inhospitable regions, and we now wended our way for about a mile along the road in search of our breakfast. During our walk it soon became evident that the ruins were not altogether deserted, owing to the appearance of one or two parties of men, who were working at clearing away the fragments with which the ground was strewn, evidently with the intention of rebuilding. It seemed almost incredible that anyone should again trust this volcano, which, now that the cloud had cleared away, was giving evidence by the smoke from its summit that another eruption might take place at any time. The work, however, was progressing very slowly without the help of the Government, which rightly considered that the place was





The Ruins of St. Pierre in 1908, six years after its destruction.  
 (The summit of the volcano, Mont Pelé, is slightly covered by a cloud.)



Morne Rouge, a neighbouring village, a few hours before its destruction.  
 (Photo by kind permission of Monsieur Fabre.)





Weeding among the Young Cane, near Robert (Eastern Coast).



Manager and Plantation Hands on Sugarcane Estate near Lamentin.



unfit for human habitation, and the undertaking was probably being carried on by those who owned land here, in the hope of being able to turn their deserted property to better account. We now arrived at the somewhat roughly-built hotel, which appeared like an oasis in the midst of desolation, where I managed to obtain a very inferior meal, together with some bread and coffee for my guide, for the exorbitant price of three francs and a half, although perhaps the proprietor had a right to make an extra charge for his risk in living in the vicinity.

An inspection of the ruins between the hotel and the foot of Mont Pelé proved that I had done right in taking my view from the end furthest from the mountain, as the devastation under its foot was so complete that the buildings seemed to be almost razed to the ground, and scarcely appeared above the scrub which had grown over them during the last six years. Perhaps the more evident effacement here had been caused by the heaping up of volcanic matter, as well as by mere destruction, both tending to level whatever stood above the surface. The town which stretched along the sea-front could never have attained a length of more than two miles, so by comparing the different aspects of its two extremities it could be seen that the effect of the eruption was strictly local, although no well-marked line of demarcation has been left on the features of the landscape. In fact, the whole of the coast line between Fort-de-France and St. Pierre presents a great family resemblance, that of a chain of uncultivated and somewhat bare hills, between which there is occasionally a fertile alluvial flat where a stream debouches into the sea, and these are the places where settlements have been made, as at Fonds-Lahaye and Case-Pilote. Mont Pelé itself, which dominates the ruined town, could never have been a picturesque mountain. The very name *pelé* (bald) conveys the idea that it had always been wanting in vegetation, and my guide informed me that none could reach its summit on account of the heat of the ground. By all accounts, however, the beautiful garden which had been made just outside St. Pierre must have imparted a beauty which the natural surroundings did not authorize. It has been so much the fashion to extol the scenery of Martinique that I have to confess somewhat diffidently that it does not seem to me to equal that of several of the British islands, and, perhaps, just as their costumes have aided in assigning an unwarranted supremacy to the women, in like manner the artificial glories of St. Pierre have influenced the judgment of former writers.

The destruction of this place with its twenty thousand inhabitants has so occupied the public attention that comparatively few are acquainted with the similar disaster which happened about four months afterwards to the three thousand people who lived in the neighbouring little town of Morne Rouge. By the kind permission of Monsieur Fabre, who resides in Fort-de-France, a reproduction is here given of this doomed place a few hours before it was destroyed. Hearing that Mont Pelé was again in active eruption he had gone to photograph the scene, which was taken about ten in the morning, and at eight on the same evening Morne Rouge and its inhabitants had ceased to exist. "If," said Monsieur Fabre, with an expressive shrug of the shoulders, "I had known what was going to happen, I would never have gone there."



In the afternoon we returned to Carbet, where I found that the high prices ruling in the vicinity of the scene of desolation had so emptied my purse that I had not enough left to buy my ticket. Determined, however, not to be left behind, I took my seat in the little steamer and awaited events. When we were out at sea the purser began to collect the fares, whereupon I explained my position, promising to pay on arrival at Fort-de-France, and in the meantime I handed him my watch as a pledge of good faith. He, however, most courteously refused to take it, saying in French, "I could not do that," and, on bringing him the money soon after my return, he declared that I need not have been in such a hurry.

The family of my hotel were people of St. Pierre, and although, fortunately for themselves, they were absent at the time of the disaster, they had, of course, lost heavily through the destruction of their property. In order to make some compensation, the Government had given them land near a little fishing village called Fonds-Lahaye, about five miles to the north-west of Fort-de-France; their new property, however, was said not to be worth one-half of what they had lost. My host asked me if I would like to accompany him there, so we walked over the hills to his house in the outskirts of the settlement, where his mother, an elderly lady in creole costume, entertained us. Fishing is the chief industry in this little settlement, although there is some agriculture in the fertile-looking flat between the coast-hills. Subsequently I made another trip in the steamer, a few miles beyond Fonds-Lahaye, to Case-Pilote, which I had passed before on my way to St. Pierre. I was fortunate in finding a good guide here, who showed me about the settlement while I was waiting for the return of the steamer. Case-Pilote is evidently a place of some importance, having a pier of its own to which the steamer is moored. This little town nestles picturesquely close to the shore, on a flat so thickly covered with coco-nut palms that the houses are almost concealed, while the bare coast-hills bound it on either side. Here also fishing appears to be the chief industry.

So far, however, my acquaintance with the Island had been confined to the western coast, and being anxious to see something of the central and eastern parts, I arranged the following expedition. There is a town called Lamentin about seven or eight miles from Fort-de-France, on its southern coast, and a little motor launch plies between the two places. The Island is here at its narrowest width, the coastline receding so much in this direction that Lamentin, instead of lying to the south, is slightly to the north of the capital. From Lamentin to Robert, a town on the eastern side, the width of the Island is only about nine miles, with constant communication between the two places by means of a buggy which carries the post. Thus there were none of those difficulties of transport which give so much trouble, the whole journey by steamer and buggy being by a public means of conveyance; while if I remained at Robert on the night of my arrival there would be time to see something of the country before returning on the following day. In case there might be some difficulty about obtaining accommodation at Robert I had been given a letter of introduction, and now set out in light travelling order with nothing but the camera and my little handbag.



The short sea passage in the calm inlet was not made in the launch itself, but in a large boat or barge towed by it. On approaching our destination, Lamentin appeared to be at least two miles back from the coast, owing to the large intervening stretch of mangrove scrub through which we passed in a salt-water channel to the foot of the town itself. On disembarking, I now ascended one of the main streets in this hilly little place, which, however, is probably second only to the capital in size, on my way to the post office for the purpose of booking my seat in time. The buggy was a lightly-built trap of the ordinary colonial pattern, with a hood which could be pulled over it in wet weather. The driving apparatus, however, was decidedly insufficient, without either a brake on the wheel or breeching on the mules, and I wondered what would happen if it were necessary to stop when we were going downhill.

We now started, the coloured driver and myself in front, with two females in the seat behind. The town, which is on rising ground, has a fairly steep descent on the inland side, down which the four mules were taking us at a good pace, when my doubts were soon dispelled as to what would happen if anything were to stop our way under such circumstances. In front of us was a cart, the driver of which either did not hear us or else could not get out of our way in time. It was, of course, impossible for us to stop, so the driver tried to pass between the cart and the right side of the road, which was here bounded by a ditch, with a bank some four feet high on the far side, with the result that our two right wheels went into the ditch, and both the driver and myself were shot out on the top of the bank, while the buggy was prevented from falling right over by leaning against it. Holding the camera carefully in my arms I had fallen on top of the driver, and, fortunately, no harm was done. My anxiety about the camera was not shared by the coloured ladies in the buggy, whose entire sympathy was with "the poor driver on whom *ce gros monsieur* has fallen." The driver, however, treated the occurrence as a matter of course, patched up the broken harness with some rope, and continued the journey at the same pace as before. There are several hilly places on this road where accidents under these conditions would be frequent if it were not for the comparative absence of traffic, which enables a considerable speed to be used when going downhill without much risk.

When we were well clear of the town there was a good opportunity of seeing what the interior of Martinique was like. Hitherto, I had been disappointed with the somewhat bare and rugged outline of the western coast, and hoped now to see some of that luxuriant tropical foliage which has been glowingly described. My expectations, however, were not realized, and the very fact that the greater part of the country between Lamentin and Robert is a succession of canefields will go a long way to justify my disappointment, as anyone who has travelled in the West Indies will bear witness that land under a cultivation of this kind does not generally present a very picturesque appearance. The continuance of canefields, in fact, gives the landscape some resemblance to Barbados, although in Martinique the more abrupt slopes and the mountains in the distance show that Nature is here on a larger and wilder scale. We arrived without further



misadventure at Robert, which lies on rising ground on the eastern coast. In the central *place* a market was being held under an enormous tree. The quaint little town, however, is not a good subject for photography owing to the fall in the ground around it.

On presenting my letter of introduction I was much disappointed at being told that there was no room for me in the house. As no one could suggest any other lodging, it looked as if I should either have to return immediately in the buggy or else remain without accommodation during the night. By this time several well-intentioned people were making suggestions in *patois*, and it seemed as if they wanted to take me to "*lamérie*," a name of unknown meaning which made me rather anxious. It was, therefore, a surprise when I found that this mysterious place was in reality *la mairie*, and that I was duly installed in the municipal building on one side of *la place*, where the *concierge* showed me a bedroom which I could occupy at night. This was the first time I had ever been made a public guest; great, however, as was the honour I would rather have had a private lodging. After taking a late breakfast at a little eating-house I walked along the roads and tracks through the neighbouring canefields, where the country, although hilly, did not offer any grand scenery either on that afternoon or on the following day, when I returned to Lamentin by the same conveyance without having seen much for my trouble, and arrived in time to catch the motor launch for Fort-de-France. The fuel becoming exhausted when we were still about a mile from the capital, our launch hoisted a signal, in response to which a steamer came to tow us to the wharf. The family of my hotel, expecting my return by this boat, had sent the same brightly attired *bonne* to help me up with my things. The red and white pattern on the creole dress of this fine-looking girl was so vivid that I wondered what people would say in some countries if they saw me thus accompanied. Fortunately, they manage things differently in Martinique, where such sights are so common that no one seemed to notice us.

A few days afterwards I returned to Lamentin to see the town and the neighbouring country, as on the former occasion there had been no time to do so. After walking on the main road towards Robert for more than a mile I turned off by a side track among the canefields which led me to a plantation, and followed an ox-cart until it arrived at the house, where I asked a black woman, who looked like a confidential servant, if I might photograph the scene. She referred me to the manager, who was just then returning from the canefields on horseback, looking the picture of a creole planter, with his light-coloured umbrella over his head. This gentleman most kindly gave me leave to photograph whatever I liked, and called up so many of the hands that the cart which was intended to be a prominent feature has almost been concealed. He then placed himself in the foreground of the group, which will give a fair idea of the workers on a sugarcane estate, in front of the plantation house. The manager is easily recognized by his umbrella, the household servant is almost in the middle, while the ox-driver stands to the extreme right with the goad in his hand. Nearly all the people are negroes, although there are at least two coolies among them, a small man rather to the right and



a woman to the left. The men generally wear palm-leaf hats, which must be more appropriate for a burning sun, and are certainly more picturesque than the dilapidated felt hats generally used by English-speaking negroes. When the photograph was taken I was invited inside the house, where the hospitable manager offered me some refreshment, after which I returned to Lamentin, better satisfied than on the former occasion.

In my efforts to utilize the time while waiting for the return of the launch I was not long in finding the makings of a splendid photograph. At the lower end of the town, near the water's edge, a miniature engine attached to several open trucks was evidently just going to start on a tram-line for some plantation. The trucks were full of plantation hands, chiefly women, who were keenly interested in my proceedings. Unfortunately, my apparatus, although good, was not of the snapshot kind, and before I was ready the little engine, after a few preliminary snorts, steamed away with its load of excited women, who were laughing and waving their handkerchiefs at me.

This lost opportunity was not likely to return, so I prepared to photograph one of the main streets instead. A crowd was beginning to form, but the people were quite orderly and no one had attempted to annoy me. Now, however, a light-coloured man became very troublesome by requiring me to take his likeness which he wished to see at once. I told him that I was not taking portraits and that in any case it would be impossible to comply with his request. On hearing this he answered angrily, "*Ah! monsieur, vous êtes malin,*" and continued his demands that I should show a sample of my work immediately; when finding that he was not likely to succeed he turned to the crowd and said in an impressive voice, "You see, this man is a German," evidently with the intention of conveying the idea that I was a German spy. I protested in vain that I was a British subject and not a German, but it did not suit my tormentor to believe me. The situation was becoming decidedly unpleasant, for although the average black or coloured man of Martinique cares nothing for the Franco-German question, a pretext of patriotism would afford an excellent excuse for injuring me or the camera. I had no one to assist me and could not pack up in a moment. It was, however, urgently necessary to go away, so noticing that there was a blacksmith's shop at the side of the road, I hastily retreated there with the camera and asked the white occupant of the place if he would kindly allow me to pack up on his premises as I was being molested outside. The man had almost granted the request, when my enemy followed me inside and violently accused me of being a German. I protested again that I was not a German, but a British subject; on hearing which the blacksmith turned to my accuser and said gravely, "There is nothing against England," upon which the disappointed intruder found himself obliged to go out of the building.

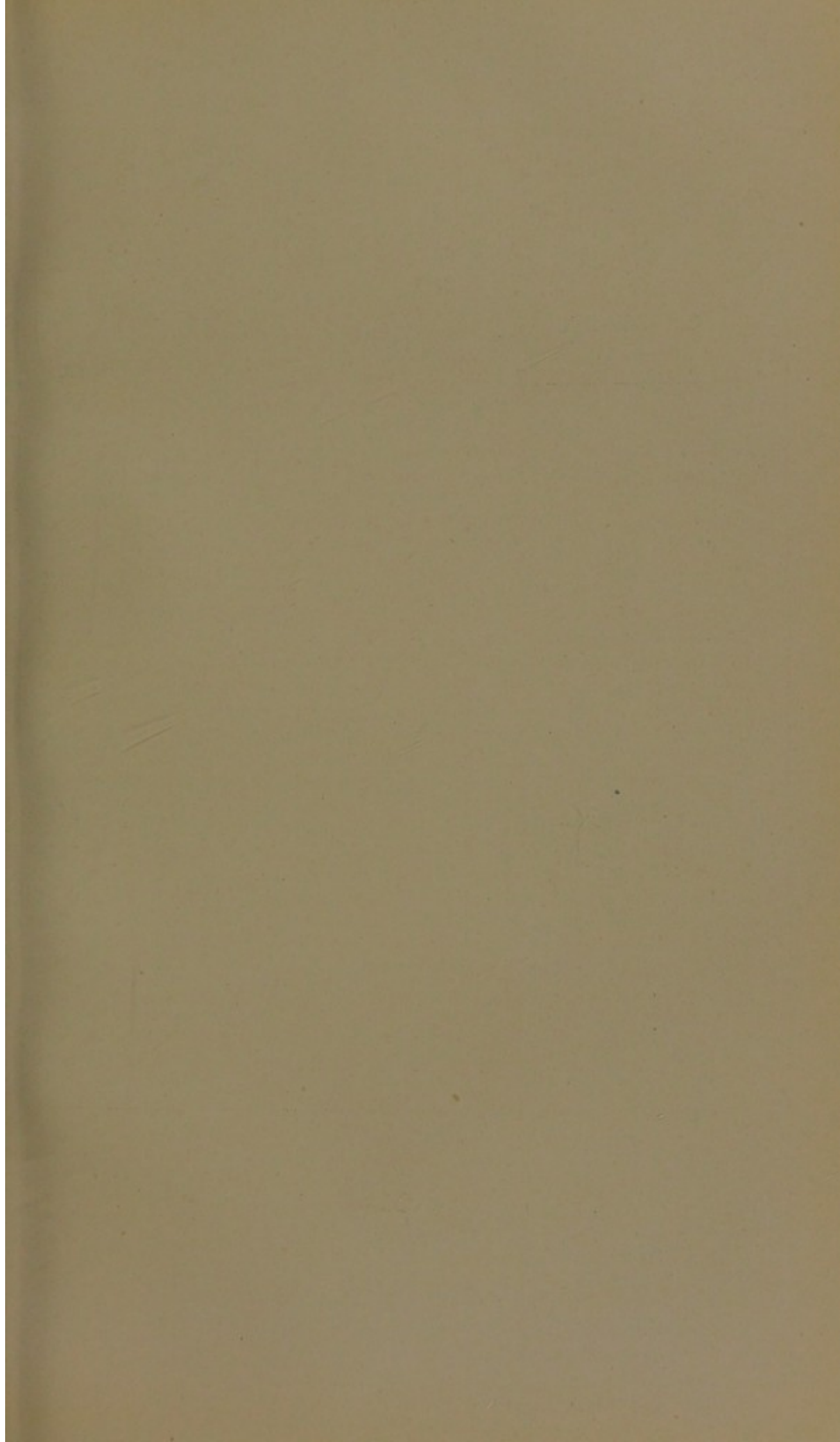
I now packed up in peace, and thanking the friendly smith for his shelter, walked straight away from the scene and rested in a refreshment house until the launch was ready to leave, as there was no view here which would compensate for risks of this kind. On relating the adventures to Monsieur Alexandre, the son of the proprietor of the hotel, he said by way of apology, "*C'est le seul, il faut lui pardonner,*"



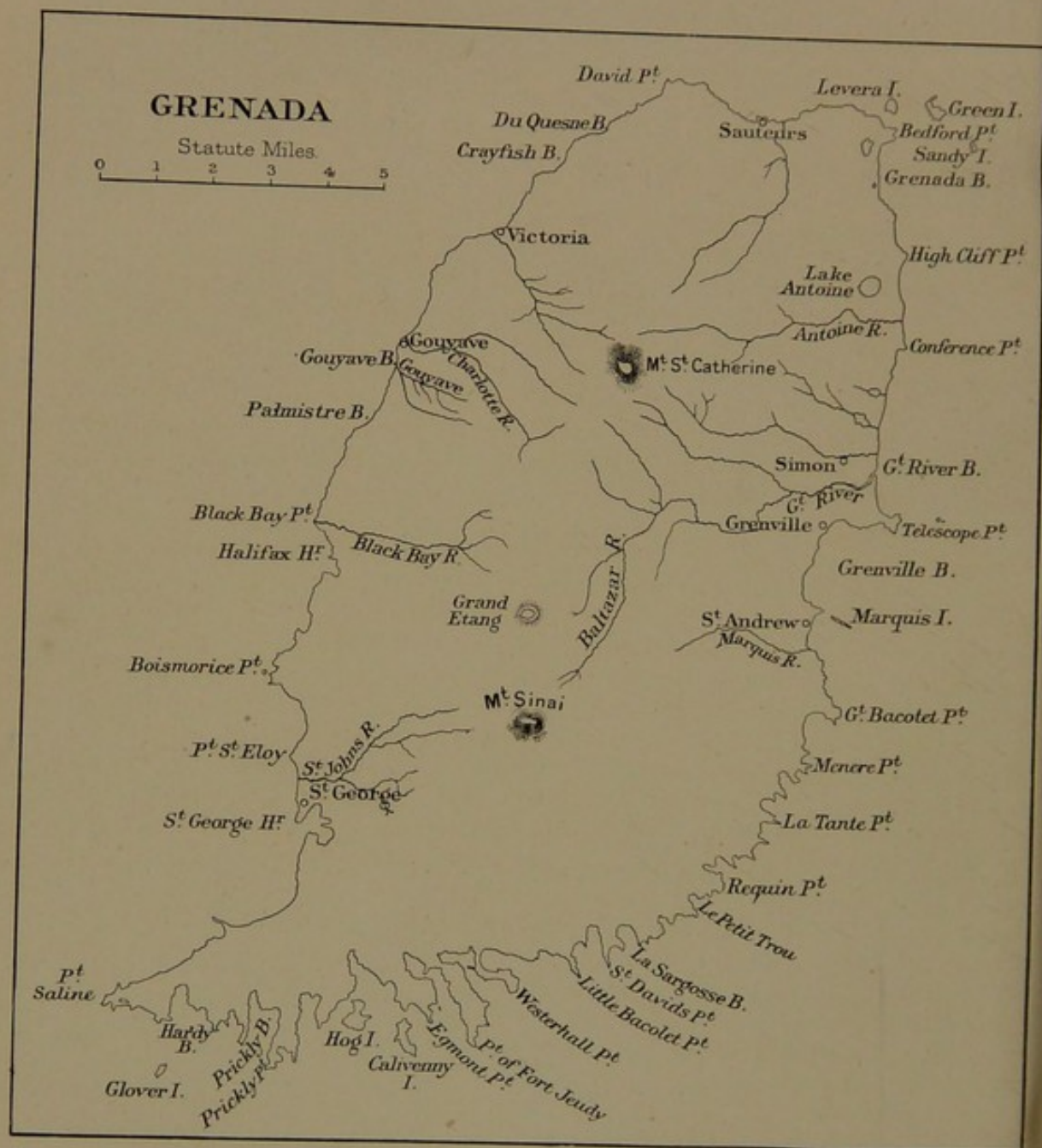
an excuse which I willingly accepted for the only incivility offered me in Martinique, when the selfish motive was so apparent that it would be unfair to hold any section of the people responsible in a place where the stranger is so free from annoyance of any kind.

Having only seen a limited part of Martinique it would be hazardous to make rigid comparisons between it and the best known British islands. No place, however, where sugar-cane is extensively grown is likely to be as picturesque as those which have not been denuded of their trees, and I am still of opinion that former writers have been describing the artificial adornments of St. Pierre rather than the natural scenery of the Island at large. In like manner I remain somewhat incredulous about the pre-eminence of the female beauty, which is largely due to the charms of the creole dress, although here again I will not speak with authority, being too well aware of the perils which have attended any attempt to decide questions of this kind, from the days of Paris to those of the Commissioner of the Cayman Islands.











## CHAPTER XVI.

## IN GRENADA AND CARRIACOU.

**S**T. GEORGE, "the prettiest harbour in the West Indies." This remark, although not original, may be endorsed with confidence relative to the capital of Grenada, which can be reached from Barbados in considerably less than twenty-four hours. Not even Castries in St. Lucia will compare with it in beauty, while its sheltered position in a narrow inlet to the south-west of the Island should make it as good a harbour as it certainly is a pretty one. Perhaps, indeed, it is owing to this very shelter that the coco-nut palms grow at its inner extremity in that luxuriant manner which so much contributes to its beauty.

On landing I allowed myself to be taken to the only hotel in St. George, as it was hardly worth while to make inquiries about a lodging-house which apparently existed, when I was going on so soon to Grenville, the principal town on the opposite side of the Island, where some friends had recommended me to make my headquarters near them. Grenville could be reached from the capital by coasting steamer or by coach; neither of these means, however, were suitable for anyone who wished to see the interior or to take photographs, and by far the best way of attaining my object seemed to be to walk through the heart of the Island from St. George to Grenville, a distance of about fourteen miles, taking on my way the Grand Etang, which is remarkable as being a small lake in the crater of an extinct volcano, about seventeen hundred feet above the sea level. In wishing to leave St. George without delay it must not be thought that any slight is cast upon the hilly little capital or its pretty surroundings, my object being to spend the time in the more remote, and to me more interesting, country districts, rather than to remain in any centre of population where so-called places of interest are shown to visitors.

From my former experience in the West Indies I thought that it would be easy to engage a man with a donkey, so that the former might act as a guide while leading the animal which carried my trunk. On making inquiries, however, I was told that donkeys were quite rare animals near the town, although common on the other side of the Island, and was, in fact, given to understand that the road up the mountain on which the Grand Etang is situated was so steep that an unfortunate donkey had fallen in making the ascent and could hardly be induced to get up. After all it was only natural that my efforts to travel thus should be looked upon with disfavour. Here was I, presumedly a tourist—cameras being now so common that they are



hardly taken seriously—who had no intention of living in town or of hiring a buggy and horses, preferring to walk by the side of a donkey like a negro. Hotel-keepers and horse-masters have no use for a person with such perverse instincts. Eventually, however, the manager of the hotel kindly provided me with a strong negro lad to carry my trunk as far as the Grand Etang, where there is a rest-house. As rest-houses are mentioned several times in connection with these adventures, it must be explained how this particular one differs from the others. The name is generally given to a small wooden house, either uninhabited, or, as in St. Lucia, occupied by a Crown-ranger, built by the Government with the intention of affording shelter to travellers in some remote part where they might otherwise be unable to obtain it. This rest-house, however, had been leased by the Government to the proprietor of the hotel in town, and was thus a branch of the same establishment, where food as well as lodging could be obtained. It stood on the edge of the crater of the extinct volcano, and had a further interest in being surrounded on all sides by the Government forest reserve.

I started, therefore, about the third morning after my arrival, in good spirits at having overcome what had threatened to be a serious difficulty, taking charge of the photographic apparatus and a handbag myself, while the negro guide carried my small trunk on his head. The first mile or two outside the town lay on comparatively flat country, although even here the graceful scenery of Grenada was noticeable. It is not so easy to describe in a few words in what this graceful appearance consists, thereby differing from the grander but somewhat sombre beauty of Dominica. Among the principal causes, however, are the luxuriance of that tropical vegetation to which the coco-nut palms so largely contribute, and to the unbroken outlines of the well-wooded hills, among which there is an absence of those bare and rugged chasms characteristic of the larger Island.

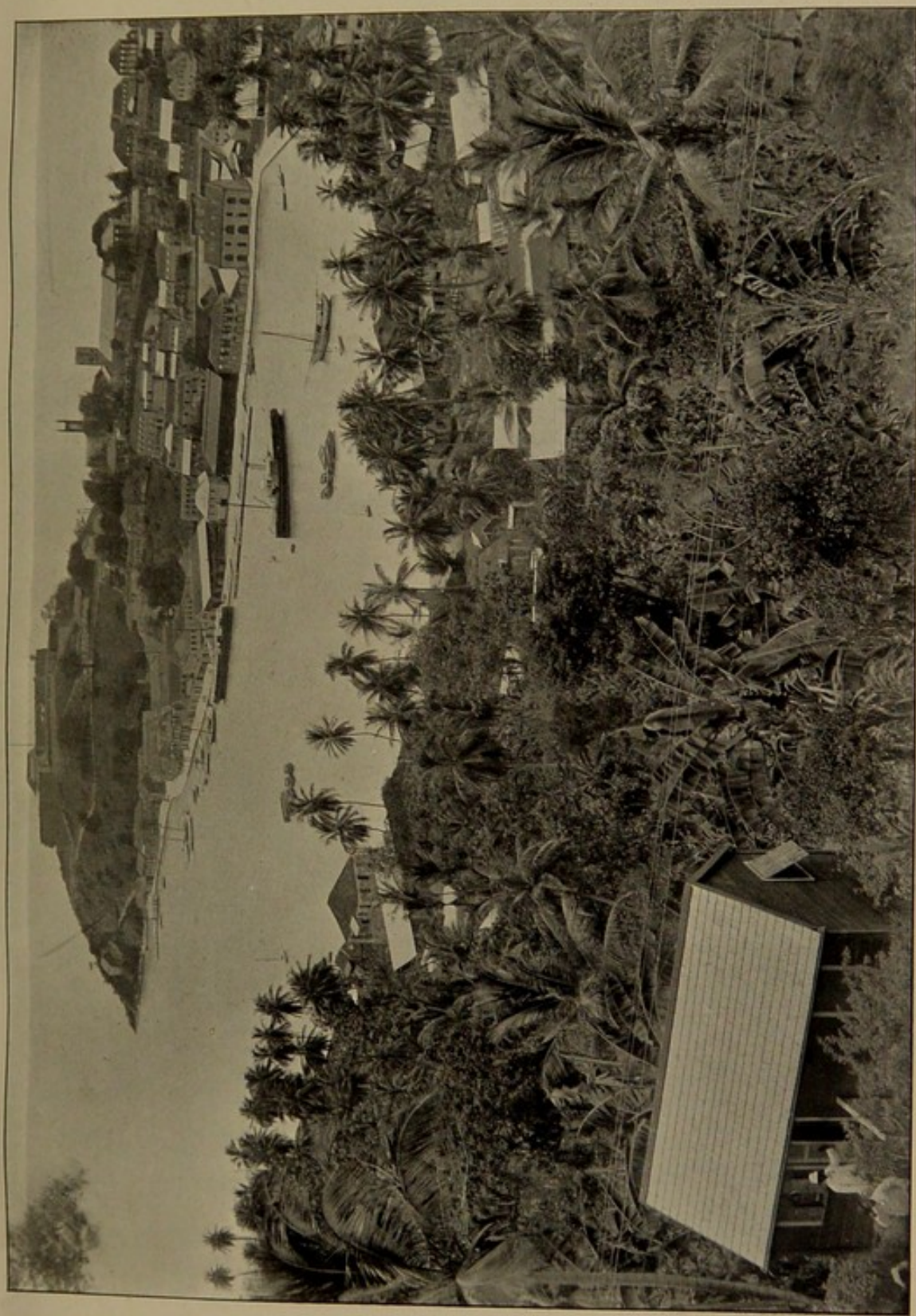
Soon, however, the ascent into the interior became perceptible, and we passed some little villages at the side of the road. The negroes in Grenada, as in the other islands which still retain French customs, are decidedly better mannered than those in Jamaica or Barbados, seldom or never annoying the traveller with those familiar solicitations for money so frequently heard in the latter places. Grenada, however, while retaining its French politeness, has changed its language to a considerably greater extent than St. Lucia or Dominica, where it is probable that a countryman will only understand his own *patois*, so that most of the people whom we met on the road could speak English, although several talked to each other in their French dialect. A young woman who was walking in the same direction as ourselves asked me where I was going, and remembering that I intended to visit a neighbouring island whose extraordinary name of Carriacou had a fascination for me, I wished to answer her thus in her own *patois* :—

*"Bonjou,<sup>1</sup> ché amouez, bonjou,  
Möèn c'aller Carriacou."*

I could not, however, put the words together in time, so merely said,

<sup>1</sup> "Good morning, sweetheart, good morning, I'm going to Carriacou."



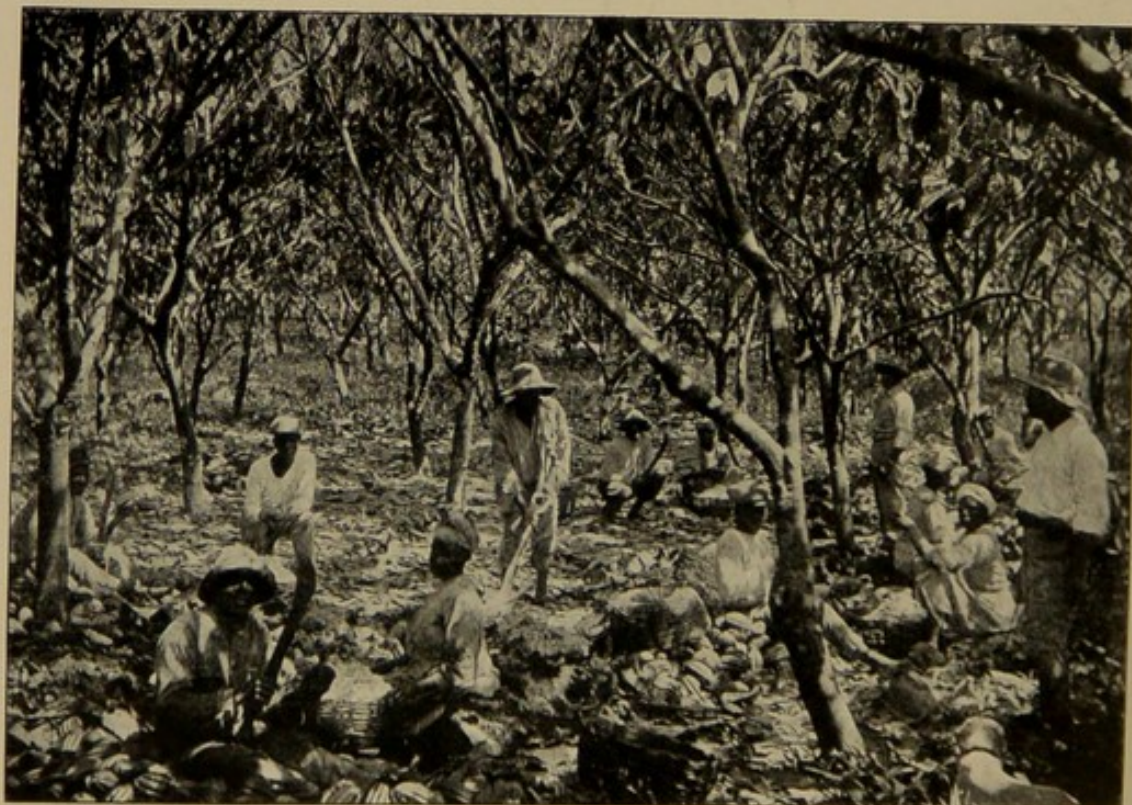


St. George, Grenada, "the prettiest harbour in the West Indies."





The Rest-house at the Grand Etang.  
The Lake lies in the hollow to the left of the house.



"Breaking Cocoa" on Balthazar Estate



"To Carriacou." The answer made her smile, as the Island is twenty-six miles distant from the northern coast of Grenada, and she replied, "Too far." This is the only occasion on which I have ever tried to break out into *patois* rhyme, so, like the man in Martinique, I must be forgiven. The first line wants little more than the replacement of the eliminated letter "r" to make good French. The construction of the second line "me to go," is quite intelligible, although the insertion of the letter "c" before the infinitive is peculiar.

By the time we had arrived at Constantine, about four miles from town, the road had already become more steep. We did not, however, reach the abrupt ascent which had so nearly proved fatal to the donkey until we were within two miles of the Grand Etang. Here we were joined by a negro politician, who had at least one qualification as such in an excellent wind which enabled him to enlarge upon the injustice from which his people were suffering, while I found that the weight of my own person, together with that of my small load, left me no superfluous lung power to carry on the conversation, and even the sturdy negro lad who carried my trunk, weighing about thirty pounds, on his head was so handicapped that he could only mutter a fervent assent to what was said. The burden of the politician's complaint was that, "Too much advantage has been taken of the poor people who have gone to Panama and to Brazil and will never return." He informed us that he had told his boy not to cry for him when he died, as he would then be more happy than those who were left to endure such bad government. There was, however, a specific grievance, which was taxation for water-pipes. In former times the people drank the stream water without charge, but now the drinking water was conveyed in pipes, to defray the expense of which a new tax had been levied. I managed to find breath for suggesting that the previous water supply might have been bad and that the pipes were, perhaps, necessary. The politician, however, denied this, maintaining that the water had always been good. Unfortunately he left us before we reached the top of the mountain, when I might have had a chance of talking with him, as it was evident that he wished me to understand the grievances of the people in the hope that I might be instrumental in making them known. Granting that the pipes may have been necessary, it was only natural that poor people who had always been accustomed to use the water without paying for it should resent the new tax, and it is quite possible that there might have been some just cause for complaint.

The ordinary tropical foliage had already become scarce when the steep but good road led us into the Government forest reserve at the top of the mountain. This interesting region may be described as a huge dome feathered with long straight trees, in the centre of which is a cup-like depression of several hundred feet, containing the small lake at its bottom. It is not merely on account of the elevation that the character of the country changes so much here, for, if the lake be at an altitude of seventeen hundred feet, the top of the mountain cannot be much over two thousand, which would not prevent the ordinary tropical vegetation from growing, although not so luxuriantly as before. No attempt, however, has been made to



introduce the trees and plants of the lower country, and thus the native timber of a cooler region is kept almost inviolate.

These long straight trees grow close together in a sombre mass which presents so little of a tropical appearance that it must be the immunity from danger rather than a fondness for the surroundings which has caused this timber reserve to become the home of those monkeys which have contributed to the quaintest of Mr. Ober's stories in his "Camps in the Caribbees." The monkeys, travelling from one tree-top to another, had approached the place where he was concealed with his guide, a negro boy, when an "old man" monkey counted out the whole tribe under his control, as they descended to the ground in search of food. Presently a half-grown monkey in a tree notices the negro, and thinking the boy is another monkey, makes signs to him to come nearer. As the boy does not respond to the invitation the young monkey calls for his mother to explain the reason, whereupon she becomes so alarmed at seeing their dreaded enemy man that she screams and lets drop the baby monkey which she was carrying in her arms, to the delight of the negro boy who runs out to catch it. All the monkeys, warned by the scream, now rush to the trees, and the baby monkey, which can hardly climb, would have been in danger of being caught, if the mother had not bent down to help her offspring. The following story which was told me by a lady who lived near Grenville, to explain how her family obtained a young monkey, is equally suggestive of the intelligence of our prehistoric relations. Her father, in one of his shooting expeditions, came suddenly upon a female monkey with two young ones. The monkey was so terrified at seeing the gun in his hands that she held out one of her young, as if imploring him to take it and to spare their lives.

On reaching the summit of the mountain there is a walk of a few hundred yards along a fairly level stretch of open ground before arriving at the rest-house, where I now presented myself and asked for accommodation. The manageress apologized for not having a sufficiently good supply of food, saying that it was customary to warn her by telephone from the hotel when a visitor was coming, and that she had received no further notice of my intended visit than the somewhat doubtful message that a photographer was walking through the woods. She was most anxious to make me comfortable, so I hastened to assure her that travellers on foot like myself could not expect much trouble to be taken on their account. Still she maintained that due notice ought to have been sent from town, as even a photographer would want food. To this I certainly agreed, and soon acted up to my words by doing justice to the substantial meal which was provided.

From the level ground near the rest-house only a slight glimpse of the lake can be seen, owing to the number of trees fringing the steep descent, down which I was now directed to follow the winding path to the water's edge, a few hundred feet below. Of course I had brought the camera with me in my anxiety to carry away a photograph of this curiosity, and was therefore much disappointed at finding that there did not seem to be a single place where a good photograph of the lake could be taken, owing to the overgrowth of trees and



scrub. The only clearing appeared to have been made at the boat-shed, which in itself impeded a free view, and the boat, which might have been serviceable in finding a better place on the other side, was padlocked to a post of the shed, while the scrub and mud round the shore of the lake made walking almost impossible. If someone had been sent to show me the way or to take me out in the boat there might have been a chance of success. Photographers, however, who walk through the woods must not expect the same attention as the ideal tourist. Finally, it began to rain steadily, upon which I retreated to the shelter of the rest-house without any inclination to return to the lake. The very fact, however, of having tried to photograph the scene has impressed it on my memory. The sheet of water is by no means pretty, and its only interest lies in the generally received opinion that it was once the crater of a volcano, otherwise it resembles a large and somewhat gloomy pond, extending a few hundred yards in its different directions. The margin is fringed with reeds in places and is almost everywhere overgrown with trees. On the far side from the rest-house the sloping banks, covered with a jungle of vegetation, extend upwards for a considerable distance, while on the near side the ascent is more abrupt. Among the trees and shrubs, however, there are not many which remind the observer that he is in the tropics, the few small palm trees and wild plantains being only sparsely represented among the foliage.

The interest of this lake, sufficiently great in itself, has been increased by mythical stories, of which the following from the visitors' book at the rest-house will serve as an example. The writer, evidently a person of a scientific and investigating mind, had been informed by the coachman that two naval officers who had visited the locality one or two years previously were unable to fathom the lake. He made the experiment himself, finding that it had a mean depth of only seventeen feet, and is further of opinion that the lake is gradually silting up.

The Government has neglected the interests of its best show place in not making one or two small clearings which would enable the sheet of water to be well seen without making any appreciable difference to the forest reserve, in the solitude of which the only two buildings appear to be the rest-house and the sanatorium. Both these neighbouring buildings are let to the proprietor of the hotel; there were, however, no other visitors on the night of my arrival.

On the following morning I was provided with another lad to carry my trunk as far as Beech Grove, a village about three miles down on the Grenville side, where I now looked about for a new means of conveyance. Presently the black driver of a buggy came up and said rather mysteriously that he could take me to Grenville. The mysterious manner was, I believe, only due to the presence of the owner of the buggy in or near the village, but the coachman's hope of receiving a gratuity outweighed any fears of his employer's displeasure. I had already found some difficulty in finding anyone to carry my trunk, so this offer was most opportune, the only drawback being that the speed with which we drove down the fertile hills did not allow sufficient time to observe the scenery. The driver had been told to take me to the Nest Hotel, which is nearly a mile inland



from Grenville, so when we had travelled about three miles I began to look out for the house, and, fortunately, saw the name on a wooden gateway while we were passing, otherwise he would have brought me right into the town.

I cannot be accused of being lavish in my praises of West Indian hotels, which generally aim at catering for wealthy tourists only, and certainly attain their object—as far as the prices charged are concerned. It is therefore pleasant to be able to speak in favour of the Nest Hotel, which can be recommended to any traveller of moderate means who would be contented with unostentatious comfort. The inclusive charges were five shillings daily, with the advantage of having meals at hours convenient to oneself. This is invaluable for landscape photographers who never know the hour of their return, for once, after taking my morning coffee, I did not come back for breakfast until three in the afternoon. My first work was to prepare a dark room, in which I was seldom interrupted, although on one of the first nights a stranger, who was talking outside to the family of the hotel, complained so much about having forgotten his cigarettes, that I opened the door of my room to offer him one of mine, which he accepted with thanks.

The friends who had recommended me to make my headquarters at this place lived almost within sight of the hotel, and one of them was of great use in showing me the surrounding country, which was hilly but fertile and almost entirely under the cultivation of cocoa. On a morning soon after my arrival we had followed the road inland near the crossing of the picturesque Balthazar River in search of a group of plantation hands "breaking cocoa," by which name the process of taking the beans from the pod is called. If, however, one is not in touch with these country estates there may be some difficulty in finding a scene of this kind, as cocoa is generally "broken" out of sight of the road in a shady grove of the trees bearing this fruit. After we had searched in vain for some time a negro directed my companion to follow a certain path which led us in a few hundred yards to a place where the plantation hands, almost all black people, were busily engaged in the shade of the cocoa forest. The cocoa pods had been taken from the neighbouring trees and were piled up on the ground in heaps. The men were cutting them open with that kind of cutlass, or machete as it is called by the Spaniards, so universally used by negroes, while the women, sitting down to their work, were emptying the beans out of the broken pods into a large basket. It will be noticed that one man appears to be digging the ground close beside the workers. Shallow trenches are, indeed, made beside each heap of empty pods, so that they may be buried for the purpose of fertilizing the ground, which afterwards emits an odour of decomposition so marked that it can be smelt at a distance on the road; only a limited quantity of cocoa, however, is broken in each place, so that the mulch may be equally distributed over the whole grove. The practice of burying the pod while yet green is not carried out everywhere, as some consider that the parasites which prey on the fruit are thus propagated, and in Trinidad it is usual to expose and burn the refuse before utilizing it.

A scene of this kind can hardly be shown to advantage in a



photograph, as the low-spreading boughs throw deep shadows in places and the frequent trunks of the trees impede the view. The trees themselves, which can hardly be called handsome, owe their chief interest to the commercial value of their fruit. They are planted close together and never attain any great size, one in full bearing being often not more than twelve feet in height, thus giving the plantation the appearance of a dense scrub. Shade is very necessary for the young trees, many being even of opinion that this shelter should be continued up to a much later period and for this purpose have planted the tall tree known as the "bois immortel" among the cocoa. This, however, is a somewhat vexed question, to which reference will subsequently be made. The pod is something like an oval melon, ribbed and variegated in its colours, among which red, yellow or green predominate, while the large beans with which the pod is filled are quite white when fresh. Cocoa growing has received a great impetus from the decay of the sugar industry, which will now only admit of a profit when the cane is cultivated under the most favourable conditions, such as on flat and open ground, so that in the broken uplands it has altogether given way before its rival. Considering how large a quantity of cocoa and chocolate is used, it is rather wonderful that so little should be generally known about the tree from which they come, while in England the unfortunate similarity in the names of two entirely different fruits, cocoa and coco-nut, until quite lately spelt in exactly the same manner, has made matters worse by imparting an element of confusion, whereas if cocoa were commonly called by its real name "cacao" no mistake could be made. The manager, who was most obliging in giving me every facility for taking this photograph, appears to the right of the picture, with his dogs couched so closely among the fragments of the pods that they are hardly noticeable, and when I thanked him for his kindness he said to me with a smile, "I suppose you don't know me; I'm the man to whom you gave the cigarette the other night."

When the cocoa beans have been picked they are brought to the boucan or drying-house. This word, better known in the form of buccaneer, is, perhaps, the only word of Carib origin incorporated into the English language. The Caribs, however, used their drying-house not for cocoa but for meat, which the pirates found so serviceable that they became known as buccaneers, which only means those who deal in dry meat. Before the beans are dried, however, they are fermented for a few days by being piled up in boxes or drawers, during which period they emit that disagreeable odour of decomposition which has been mentioned with reference to the broken pods when buried in the ground. They are now spread out in the sun to dry in a manner which the photograph will explain better than words. The people in the foreground are those who have been carrying the cocoa to the boucan, the long plantain leaves on their heads being merely used to protect themselves from the sun. A large quantity of beans have been spread out to dry on trucks which are run in and out of the boucan on rails. These trucks and rails are used to ensure quickness of action, as Grenada is a mountainous country with a heavy rainfall, and if the beans could not be run under shelter at once when a storm comes on they would be spoiled. Behind the cocoa



stands the large stone boucan, and in the distance are the picturesquely wooded hills.

Within two miles inland from the Nest Hotel the road twice crosses the Balthazar River, which is said to be the largest in Grenada. Indeed its size is quite wonderful for so small an island and is, of course, due to a mountainous country with its attendant rainfall. Apart, however, from the considerable body of water which dashes over its rocky bed, giving it the appearance of a scene in Jamaica, it is quite as remarkable for its beauty, towards which the foliage on its winding banks and the fertile hills at their back contribute; nor in the whole of the West Indies have I seen a river which could fairly be called its superior, although some might be considered equal. Unfortunately my best views of this river were spoiled by unlucky accidents, and the only one left hardly does it justice. A young white employee from the neighbouring plantation asked me what name I meant to give this picture and suggested that, as there were three girls on the rocks, it should be called "The Sirens." These girls are all good types, not of sirens, with whom I am not acquainted, but of natives, the one to the left being either black or nearly so, while the two who are further out in the river are quite light coloured.

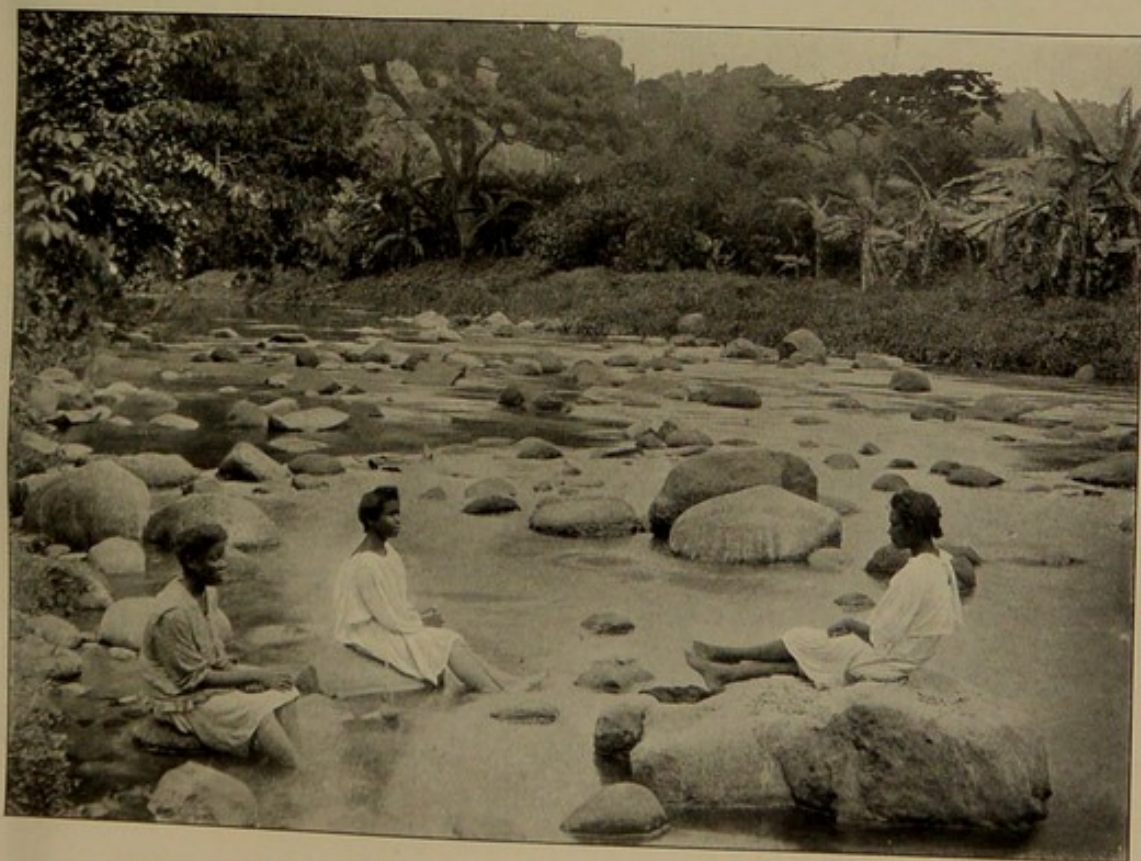
Up to now all my excursions had been inland, so I strolled into Grenville on a Saturday afternoon in the hope of finding some animated view on so busy a day. The town lies close to the sea within a mile of the Nest Hotel, the latter part of the way being down a rather steep incline. The market-place offered an object of unusual interest to anyone who could find a position sufficiently elevated to command the scene. No such place, however, seemed to be available, and I had almost given up hope when someone advised me to ask at the police-station if I might go up into the Court-house, on the second floor of a building which overlooks the neighbourhood. My request was readily granted, with the result that I was shown up into the now empty room by a smart black policeman who was probably a Barbadian. The position was so good that it would have been my own fault if the result had not been successful. Immediately below me lay the open market-place literally packed with people, with the church just beyond, and the outskirts of the settlement in the distance. To the right lay the shore where several sailing-boats were attached, thereby suggesting that some of the market people had come by sea, while to the left lay the main street of the town. The panorama was complete.

On this side of the Island, about six miles north of Grenville, there is another lake believed also to have once been the crater of a volcano. It is stated in the "West Indian Pilot" to be six feet below the level of the sea, a great contrast to the Grand Etang at seventeen hundred feet above it, and my failure to secure a photograph of the latter made me all the more anxious to obtain one of Lake Antoine. My friend wished to walk there with me, and if I had accepted his offer the result would probably have been more satisfactory. Not wishing, however, to give him so much trouble, I arranged with a man in Grenville for the use of a small buggy at the moderate charge of eight shillings. When we had followed the road along the sea-front for a few miles I was disagreeably surprised at hearing the driver, a



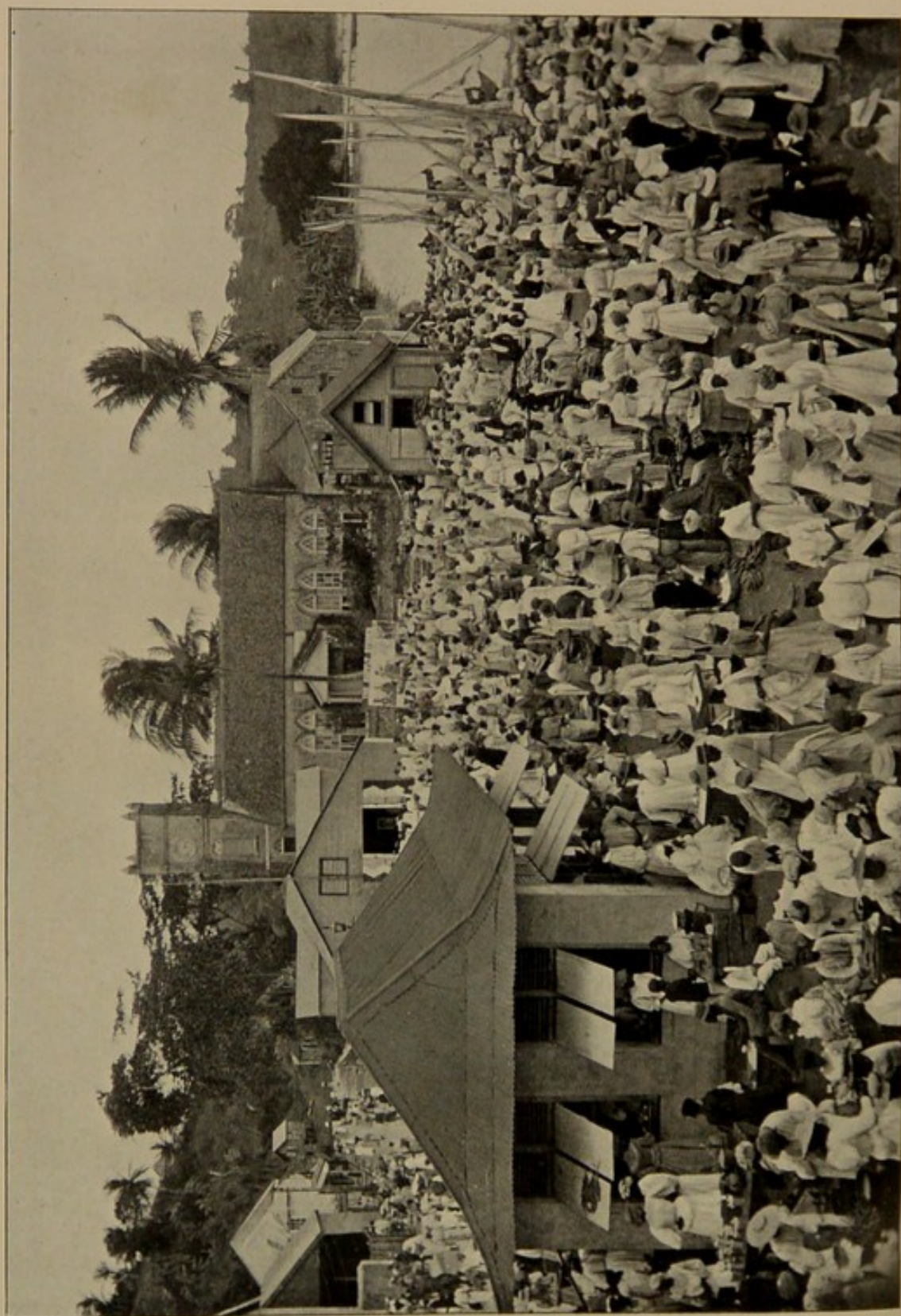


Cocoa Beans drying in front of the Boucan on L'Esterre Estate.



The Sirens of the Balthazar River.





Grenville Market.



negro lad, ask to be directed to the lake, and after showing his ignorance of the way several times, he admitted that he had only been there once when he was a little child. We had driven about seven miles and had evidently overshot the mark, being now directed to go back about a mile. Even here no lake was visible, but fortunately we found a negro on the road who was willing to guide us to the place, on seeing which the mistake of the driver could be understood. He had evidently retained a vague idea that the lake was so near the sea-front as to be visible from the road which runs along the coast, while in reality it was quite far enough back to be missed by anyone who did not know the landmarks well, being nearly half a mile from the sea and separated from it by a steep hill which evidently once formed part of the side of the volcano.

Our new guide led us up this hill by a path so abrupt that the empty buggy was a sufficient load for the horse, and, on reaching the top, the lake lay immediately below us on the inland side. We were now presumedly on the summit of the extinct volcano which extended at unequal elevations round the water in its crater. At the place where we had made the ascent the top of the hill was what is popularly called a "razor-back," so narrow that by going a few yards in a transverse direction a considerable descent would be made on one side or the other. A position of this kind is most undesirable for photography, leaving no margin for a change of position. We were already so near that the full circumference of the lake could not be included, and, if we retreated a few yards, the top of the "razor back" stood in the way. On the opposite side, at what appeared to be the south-western extremity of the lake, there was a place where the descent might have been made by a gentle incline along which my friend would probably have brought me by an inland route, so as to obtain a view of the lake at a greater distance. As it was, the photograph had to be taken from where we stood, as the buggy could not be taken any further through the bush. Lake Antoine is not pretty, perhaps having less pretensions in this respect than the Grand Etang, which at any rate has much more foliage around it. It is, however, somewhat larger than its mountain rival, although the little grassy patches which rise above the surface of its water give the impression that it is very shallow. The distant view, however, is wild and looks on a large scale for a small West Indian Island.

Among the many pretty views left untaken in the neighbourhood of Grenville was that of the Paradise River, which we had passed on our way to Lake Antoine. I was, however, obliged to hurry away in order to avail myself of an opportunity for seeing the Island of Carriacou before returning to St. George at the end of the week. A steamer was leaving Sauteurs on the northern coast for Carriacou on Thursday afternoon and, arriving before dark, would not commence the return journey to St. George until midday on Friday, thereby giving me the whole morning in the little Island. There was some difficulty, however, about reaching the northern port in time, as the mail-coach which goes between Grenville and Sauteurs generally arrives at the latter place after the steamer has left for Carriacou, a proof of such bad management that I began to think that there might be some truth in the complaints of the black politician for surely a



mail-coach ought to arrive in time to catch the steamer which presumably carries the mail. I succeeded, however in hiring the same little buggy as before, and sending my trunk back to St. George by steamer from Grenville, I started for Sauteurs with only the camera and two little hand parcels. This time, fortunately, the driver really did know the way, as the distance between Grenville and Sauteurs is about eleven miles, part of the journey being so hilly that at a place called Gru-gru, about two-thirds of the distance towards Sauteurs, there was an ascent so steep that the horse was barely able to draw its light load to the top. We had, however, allowed such ample time for catching the steamer that we arrived nearly an hour before its departure. After taking some light refreshment at a shop in the straggling settlement I strolled about in an unavailing search for views without having time to reach the neighbouring hills; in any case, however, I should have been obliged to reserve most of my endeavours for Carriacou on the following morning.

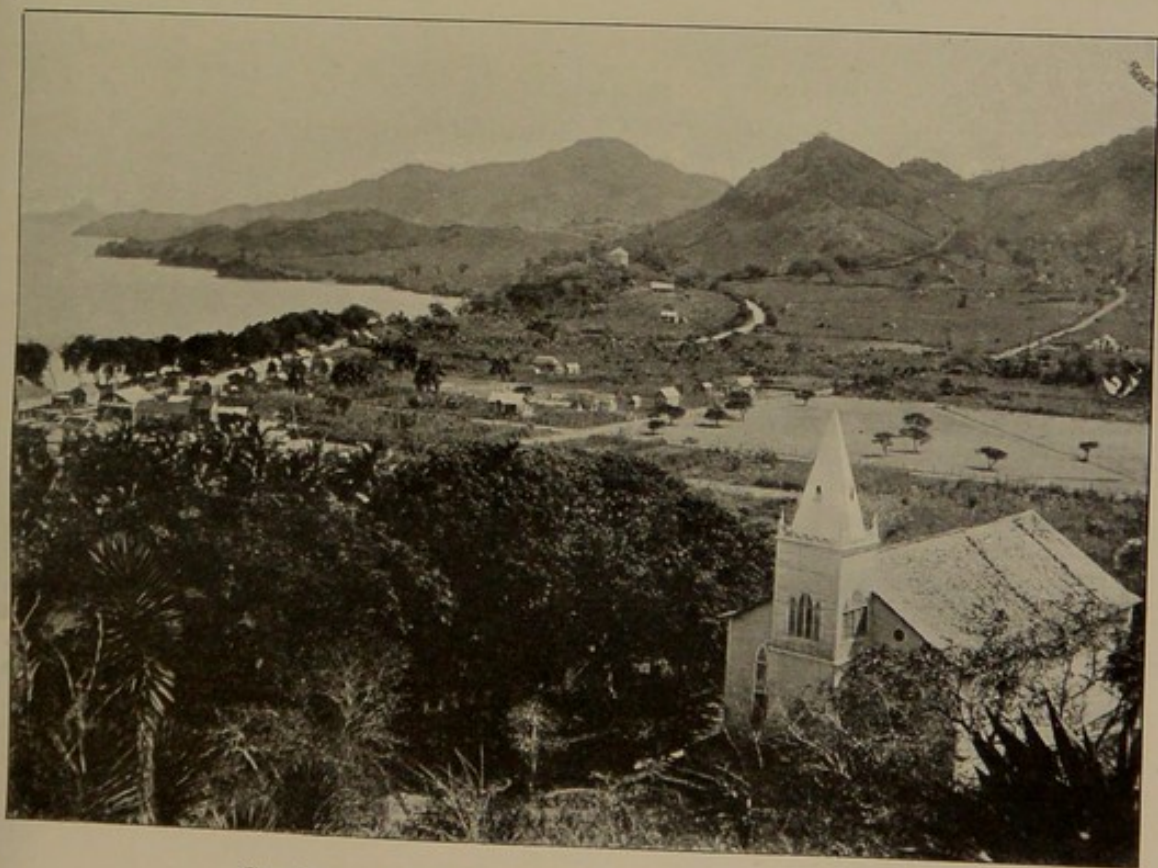
Grenada is one of the West Indian Islands whose history is associated with the unfortunate Caribs, who will be further mentioned under Dominica. The name of Sauteurs recalls vividly the final tragedy which put an end to the native race in this locality, when in despair at falling into the hands of their white conquerors they threw themselves into the sea from a cliff near the landing-place. This cliff is not very high, nor does the water appear very deep, thereby suggesting so many ghastly possibilities that we must hope there has been some exaggeration connected with the story. While, however, there are now no Caribs in this Island, I came across the quarter of one, not in a mutilated fragment, but in the living semblance of one who had a Carib grandmother. The person in question was a very presentable young woman with that yellow complexion and frizzly black hair which is generally associated with those who derive about a quarter of their origin from a negro source. Until she told me about her Carib relation I took her for the ordinary mixture of white and black with a greater proportion of the former, although after this information about her Indian blood I fancied that traces of her submerged ancestry were discernible. Communicative as she was about two of her ancestral strains, she kept a dark silence in keeping with the colour of the third, for when she had finished this part of her family history she added after a pause, "Yes my blood is very mixed," and I thought that something about her black relations would follow, instead of which came the final remark, "My grandfather was an Italian."

From Cayman to Carriacou is a far cry, considerably more than a thousand miles, and both places are little known, even by name, to those who visit the West Indies. Carriacou is generally given as the largest of that chain of islands known as the Grenadines, which stretch northwards from Grenada towards St. Vincent, although some say that Bequia equals it in size. Many of these Grenadines are mere rocks in the ocean. Carriacou, however, attains the dimensions of about six miles in length by more than two in breadth, and has a Commissioner of its own, under the Government of Grenada, from which it is twenty-six miles distant. Its extraordinary name had a fascination for me; in fact, it was a case of *mòèn c'aller*, that vague infinitive construction,





Lake Antoine, said to be the Crater of an Extinct Volcano, about six miles north of Grenville.



Carriacou, with Union Island in the distance.





A Girl of Carriacou.



"me to go," which will serve for "I am going" or, as in this case, "I must go." Being curious to know the meaning or derivation of this word, which seemed to be connected in some way with the Caribs, I was rather disgusted at being told that the name of the Island was the result of a remark made by a north countryman in which the words "carry a coo" (cow) were the prominent feature. This was something like Mr. Ober's experience on hearing the armadillo called "hagina mah." He was pleased at finding that the animal was still called by an apparently Carib name, but felt what can only be described as "given away" when the negro explained that the supposed native name arose from the similarity of the armadillo to a hog-in-armour. It was consoling, therefore, to find in Mr. Fiske's book, "The West Indies," that a second form of the Island's name is Cariabacou, which clinches the matter in favour of an origin from a Carib or *Caraibe* source as the French-speaking people would call it.

When the little steamer from the western coast of Grenada came within sight of Sauteurs the small boat in which we were taken out to meet it was so crowded with about seventeen people that the gunwale barely kept above the water's edge—not a very safe proceeding considering that there were a good many black women and even babies among us. In our course towards Carriacou we passed several of the Grenadines, some of the larger ones having a few cottages upon them. One of these islands is called Kick-em-Jinny, the first part of this peculiar compound word being said to be a corruption of the title *comte*, and the latter part a similar transformation of the French nobleman's name. The passage, generally said to be a rough one, did not test our seafaring capabilities too severely on this occasion, allowing us to land in good order and condition before sundown.

And did Carriacou come up to expectation? It must be confessed that my feelings were rather those of disappointment, for which I myself was responsible through having expected too much. Carriacou was just a fair sample of little islands of this kind, being rugged and hilly, with a corresponding scarcity of foliage, rather than abounding in those luxuriant scenes thought by many to be universal in the West Indies. Its centre is occupied by a hill so large that it might almost be called a mountain, of which the somewhat bare-looking ascent begins only a short distance back from the coast, as if suggesting that the capital lying at its foot has been appropriately called Hillsborough. In front of the landing-place lies an open and flat piece of ground on which is situated the large building containing the public offices, while to the right is almost the only grouping of houses which deserves the name of street. Here was situated the only lodging-place, where I arrived after a walk of a few hundred yards among the straggling houses interspersed with trees. The little wooden hotel was not very smart-looking, although the nice old creole lady made me comfortable at a moderate charge. It was too late in the evening to do anything except stroll about in the outskirts of the settlement in search of a suitable elevation for taking a photograph on the following day, and before sundown I had already chosen a small hill just above the church as a likely place in default of finding a better.



The following tragedy connected with cotton-growing, the principal industry of this Island, shows that even little Carriacou is not exempt from that predial larceny, or theft of standing crops, which is such an undesirable feature on West Indian plantations. On a certain estate where the cotton pods were ripe, it was found on the morning appointed for picking them that some thief had forestalled the work of the planter's labourers, leaving the bushes denuded of their white burden. In spite of the precaution of placing men on guard during the night, the theft was repeated with impunity on subsequent occasions. The black watchmen had become sensitive at having their fidelity suspected, so that when at last they were sure that the marauder was in the cotton field they hastily awoke the owner and his nephew. The latter, a fine young man, was the first to seize the thief, who in desperation plunged his knife into the throat of his captor, so that by the time the others came up the homicide<sup>1</sup> was already deluged in the blood of his victim, who, however, lingered several days before he died. Predial larceny, however, is seldom followed by such violent results.

In the morning my hostess provided me with a guide, with whom I now walked over the rising ground above the town without being able to find any position more suitable than the one which I had chosen on the previous evening. On asking the advice of some of the residents they recommended me to go on top of the lofty hill in the centre of the Island. Every photographer, however, has probably experienced the disastrous result of being sent to some elevated place to obtain a distant bird's eye view without having any other foreground except scrubby trees on a rugged hillside immediately below him. My time, also, was too short for explorations of this kind, so I returned to the little hill overlooking the church, which, at any rate, commands a considerable extent of coast line, together with some of the buildings in the outskirts of the settlement.

There was now time to devote some attention to the little town itself, where I was much surprised at the number and dressy appearance of the coloured and black people who were strolling about as if in honour of a festive occasion, and on inquiring the cause I was told that an important case for which a lawyer had been brought from Grenada was going to be tried in the Court-house. These holiday-makers, however, were so little concerned about the lawsuit that when I made preparations for taking a photograph the principal difficulty consisted in the number of people who crowded in front of me.

I wished to carry away the likeness of a type of the female beauty of this remote place, my choice falling on a fine-looking girl in her working attire rather than on one of those dressed up for the occasion. She was of that dark chocolate colour which is admired and known under the name of "sambo." This colour is generally supposed to be due to a slight admixture of white blood, although some declare that they have known black people to have sambo-coloured children. On the principle, however, of like producing like, the former theory is probably correct, especially as these sambo-coloured

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<sup>1</sup> The man was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment, and died before the completion of the term.



people not infrequently have good European features, as if their white strain asserted itself in the shape of the face rather than in the colour of the skin. The modified French form of her headdress will be noticed, with the ends of the kerchief standing up, although much reduced in size. Even the famed beauties of Martinique will have a difficulty in disputing the supremacy with a type of this kind, so that the champions of their charms may fairly be asked, "Have you ever seen the girls of Carriacou?" And the chances are they never have.

After all, I had no reason to be dissatisfied with my half-day in the little Island, for if the scenery did not come up to expectation the girl had made amends for it. Towards midday I returned to my lodging for breakfast before going on board the steamer, which returned to Sauteurs, and then coasted in smooth water on the leeward side of Grenada to St. George, where we arrived before nightfall, after calling at the intermediate ports of Victoria and Gouyave. The eighteen miles of coast-line between Sauteurs and St. George are, generally speaking, hilly, although fertile, with patches of cane cultivation in several places. The next day, Saturday, was devoted to the capital which looks at its best at market time, and on Monday the steamer carried me back to Barbados, where I now formed the outline of an expedition to several of the northern islands, which might have been visited when I was on my way to Barbados for the first time, by continuing my journey south-easterly from Haiti, instead of returning by Jamaica to take the Panama route.

In making a selection of the islands which I wished to visit my choice fell on the following six: Dominica, Montserrat, St. Kitts, Saba, St. Martin and St. Thomas, in the order mentioned. Far, however, from being chosen at random, there was a specific object in going to each, and even now with the experience gained, I doubt whether a better arrangement could have been made.

Dominica had a double attraction from being the only island in the West Indies, with the exception of St. Vincent, where there are any surviving Caribs, besides having probably the grandest scenery of all the Lesser Antilles. My reason for visiting Montserrat was to find out whether the people really spoke in that peculiar way which will be subsequently described. Steamers would hardly be available beyond St. Kitts, so it was desirable to go there if only to reduce the voyages in sailing ships to their smallest limits. Saba was interesting from its extraordinary configuration, as of a huge rock rising out of the sea. St. Martin had two distinct objects of interest, the salt-ponds and the divided nationality of this little Island between Holland and France. My chief object in going to St. Thomas was on account of its being a port of call for steamers on their way to Europe. The capital, however, bore the name of having very pretty scenery, besides which it was a Danish island, so that by including it in my list I should have seen the West Indies under six<sup>1</sup> different flags, namely, those of Cuba, Great Britain, Haiti, France, Holland and Denmark.

So I now said a long farewell to little Barbados, which had not then grudged its hospitality to second-class passengers and had been a pleasant headquarters, intending to remain a month in Dominica, and shorter periods in the other islands as circumstances might direct.

<sup>1</sup> Seven, counting the few days on the borders of Santo Domingo.



## CHAPTER XVII.

## IN DOMINICA.

THE passage between Barbados and Dominica was delayed by calling at three intermediate ports in Grenada, St. Vincent and St. Lucia, otherwise it would have taken much less than two days to arrive at Roseau, which lies on an open roadstead on the western or sheltered side of the Island. There had been an epidemic in Barbados at the time of my departure, but, owing to the convention which accepts a quarantine of observation, the health officer merely told me to present myself every morning for inspection during the next few days, which was much more convenient than being shut up; although, of course, it prevented any long excursion until the period of observation had passed.

In order to have the necessary facilities for developing my photographs, I had asked the black man who carried my luggage from the boat to bring me to a place where there were plenty of outhouses. He set about his task, however, so slowly, perhaps from the fear of offending former patrons, that as night was falling I told him to bring me anywhere. He now promptly brought me to a good boarding-house where I soon saw that it would be difficult to do any of my work, as in most of these places where tourists or travellers are received the outhouses are so occupied with cooking requirements that there is no space for anything else.

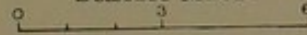
On the following morning, therefore, after my duty visit to the health-officer, I obtained leave from a photographer to use his dark room. There were, however, several difficulties in availing myself of the permission, the principal being that this place was merely a makeshift partitioned off from the room occupied by his family, on whom I should thus be intruding. He had, however, been so ready to oblige me that I thought it might be worth while asking him if he knew of any house with photographic requirements where I could lodge, upon which he and his wife interested themselves so successfully on my behalf that in about three days after my arrival I was able to move into a private house in Church Street, where I lived most comfortably during my stay in the Island. It was almost an ideal place for a travelling photographer, having a large back yard in which there were one or two almost unused outhouses and an abundant supply of water.

Roseau itself does not offer much inducement in the way of views, consisting of broad, rectangular streets bounded by these undemonstrative wooden houses which harmonize with that somewhat decayed appearance but too common in the British West



# DOMINICA

Statute Miles



PRINCE RUPERT  
BAY

Portsmouth

R. Picard

M<sup>t</sup> Diablotin

R. Clyde

Petit  
Marigot

Pagoua B.

R. Pagoua

Salybia  
Carib Settlement

Castle Bruce

S<sup>t</sup> Davids B.

R. Yellow

S<sup>t</sup> Joseph

R. Layou

R. Rosalie

Rosalie P<sup>t</sup>

The Lake

R. Roseau

ROSEAU

M<sup>t</sup> Watt

Mulatre P<sup>t</sup>

Michelle P<sup>t</sup>

Soufrière B.

Soufrière  
Valley

GRAND BAY







Indies. There are, however, a few fine-looking churches, among which the Roman Catholic cathedral is especially noticeable. A fashionable wedding which was going to be celebrated here had excited a young coloured woman in the vicinity to such an extent that on the day before the ceremony she frequently exclaimed, "My wedding, my wedding, I'm going to be married to-morrow at two o'clock." This outburst seemed all the more quaint for being uttered with a decided French accent. Dominica, indeed, is almost as French as St. Lucia, and although every one I came across in Roseau could speak English, they frequently did so as a foreign language.

Just outside the town is a hill called the Morne Bruce, commanding a view of the pretty botanical gardens underneath it and of the town between the gardens and the sea, while, on turning towards the inland and opposite side, there is a glorious panorama of the gorge of the Roseau River which descends in a torrent from the dividing range and winds round the level country in the outskirts of the town before discharging itself into the sea. This view, however, is not adapted to photography, owing to the excess of foliage around the gorge, causing it to appear like a dark mass, in which the water was too far distant to show out to advantage; so I followed the river up for a little more than a mile to a place where, at the expense of a more limited prospect, the nearness of the water afforded a better contrast.

My principal inducement, however, in coming to Dominica had been to see the Caribs who live in their reservation called Salybia, on the opposite side of the Island; so when my quarantine of about six days was over, I consulted with my kind hostess as to how I should be able to visit them, and found that my expedition was looked upon as one of great difficulty. In fact, the impediments seemed greater than a journey of more than one hundred miles over unknown country would have been in my former colonial days; and this was all the more incomprehensible considering that the place which I was going to visit could not have been much more than fifteen miles distant in a straight line. In Dominica, however, travelling in a straight line is, to say the least, a thing of rare occurrence, and a few words of explanation will be necessary.

The Island, although larger than those which I had been visiting lately, is only twenty-nine miles long by sixteen in breadth, and its population has been given as under thirty thousand, thus showing it to be even more lightly inhabited than St. Lucia. The small number of its inhabitants is in great measure owing to the intractable nature of its formation, a considerable part of its surface consisting of mountains of no inconsiderable height, and as one gazes upon the large extent of wild and wooded uplands it becomes easy to understand why this Island should have been one of the last strongholds of the unfortunate Caribs. It would be impossible for civilized troops to wage a direct warfare in a country where artillery and horses, two of the most effectual means of frightening savages, would be useless, and where the endless mountain and bush, while impeding all military formation, would afford unbounded shelter to those who knew the ground so well. Much, however, might be done by harassing the



natives until they were starved out, as the mountains alone would never afford them sufficient food and the Caribs had always been a maritime people. More fortunate than their kinsmen in Grenada, they made a timely surrender and are now peacefully becoming extinct as a race, although an infusion of their blood will yet survive in the land which was once their own.

Their reserve at Salybia, practically inaccessible from Roseau in a straight line, is generally approached by the coasting steamer, and the difficulties of the undertaking, whether by land or by sea, were so well explained that they became outlined in my mind before I commenced the journey. In the first place the company whose steamer makes the circuit of the Island from Roseau does not undertake to land passengers on the eastern coast, the procedure being as follows: On arriving at any of the usual stopping-places, which cannot be called ports, as there is no shelter on the windward side, the steamer blows a warning whistle and stops. If the sea is not too rough canoes are put out to take passengers and cargo to the shore, perhaps having to paddle a good half mile each way, but if the roughness of the weather prevents the canoes from responding to the signal, the steamer goes on to the next stopping place, where the same procedure is repeated, so that it is quite possible that a passenger might not be able to land at any settlement on the eastern coast, in which case he would have to continue his journey right round to the sheltered side of the Island. Of course the journey might be made by a roundabout land route, although even with a competent guide the difficulties would be considerable. I was also assured that I should get nothing to eat on the windward coast. This also acts as a deterrent, for, as remarked in Grenada, even "photographers walking through the woods" need refreshment. By nothing to eat is meant, of course, nothing which a stranger would like to eat, the food of the poorer inhabitants consisting largely of peculiar dishes which would be repugnant to anyone not accustomed to them. Lastly, the language of all the people is French *patois*, so that an interpreter would be necessary. And if all these difficulties were overcome there was the return journey, when if the weather was too rough for canoes to go out to meet the steamer I should either have to wait for a more favourable occasion or be obliged to hire a guide to conduct me through a trackless region abounding in mountain, scrub and swamp. I thought at the time that this was an exaggerated picture, but it proved to be much nearer the truth than I expected.

A last kindly effort was made to induce me to abandon the undertaking by bringing me a young Carib woman who had left the reservation and was living in Roseau, so that I might obtain a photograph without making the journey. While, however, I found out afterwards that she was really a good type, it was impossible to be sure of this without having compared her with others.

This expedition, indeed, promised such novel experiences that the only plan which could be outlined was to approach the reservation as nearly as possible by steamer and to return by the most available means. The steamer takes the southern coast first in its passage round the Island, the nearest stopping place to Salybia being generally at Marigot, some eleven miles to the north and therefore



beyond it. Occasionally, however, a stoppage is made at Castle Bruce eight miles south of Salybia, if there is any cargo to deliver, and, this being the case on the steamer's very next voyage, so favourable a chance was not to be lost. As everything brought with me might have to be carried on the return journey, I only took the barest necessities, including, of course, the camera and its stand, together with the little handbag which contained among other things some photographic material, to enable me to know for certain if my photograph of the Caribs had been successful before I left the reservation.

On the evening of my departure I took the last good meal before my return and then hired a little boat to bring me out to the steamer, as passengers generally prefer to come on board before midnight rather than at the inconvenient hour of three in the morning. There were sleeping places at the side of the saloon where I managed to rest fairly well, as the sea on the windward side, which we must have reached before daylight, was by no means excessively rough. Towards seven in the morning those dripping sounds generally associated with the falling of rain caused me to verify my suspicions by going on deck. We were, however, many miles south of Castle Bruce and the weather might mend before arriving there, although the laden and overcast appearance of the sky gave every promise of a downpour worthy of an island which registers more than two hundred inches of rain in some of its mountain districts. From a sheltered part of the deck I now watched our passage along the wild and mountainous coast, with the anxiety of one who had absolutely no covering except the light washing clothes which he wore, and had no desire to make a bad beginning by becoming drenched at the very commencement of the expedition.

At one of the stopping-places our cargo was discharged in a rather unusual manner. There were some large vats for holding condensed lime-juice to be landed here. When, however, the steamer blew the warning whistle, no canoes responded to the call, so the vats were thrown overboard on the assumption that they would drift towards the shore. An iron hoop for binding the staves having fallen off one of the vats thus discharged, a sailor held it irresolutely in his hand for a few seconds, as if uncertain what to do with it, and finally with the cheerful smile of one who is determined to do his duty, he threw it overboard also. Perhaps it was just as likely to reach its destination as the vats, for when we were some distance away the chief officer gave a last look at them, and remarked that they were floating out to sea.

It was late in the morning when we rounded a picturesque headland and stood out in the bay opposite Castle Bruce, when fortunately for me the canoes came out in answer to the steamer's whistle. The rain was not falling quite so heavily now, although still sufficiently to wet anyone who was not suitably dressed, and I confess to feeling rather miserable as I waited on the wet deck, before descending the ladder at the steamer's side to take my place in a still more wet canoe, whose moist condition inside was due to shipping surf water as well as receiving the steady rain. And when I landed, more or less wet, there seemed to be no place to shelter me! "I don't envy you," said the officer on deck with a smile. Emboldened by the sympathetic tone



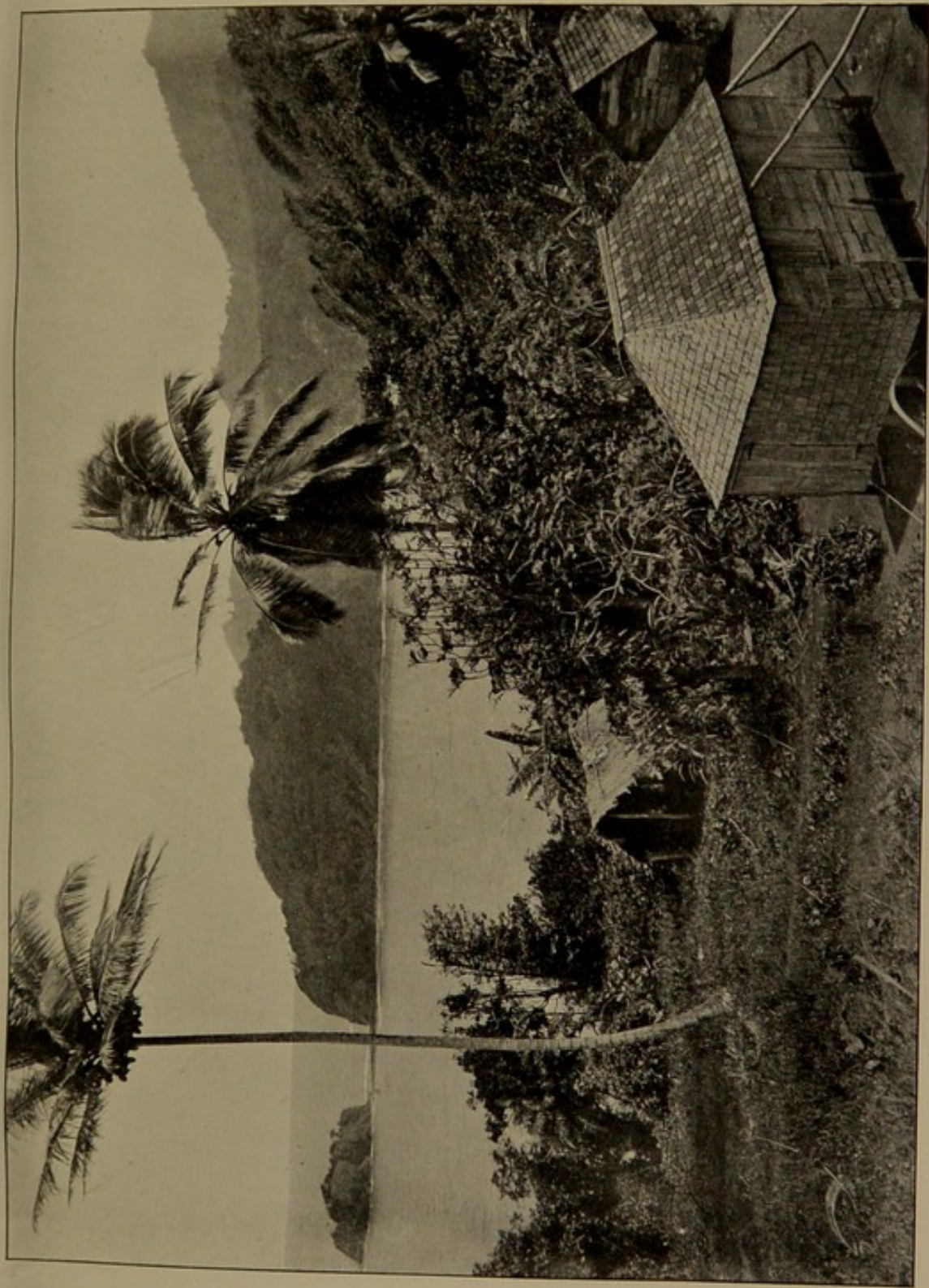
of his voice I asked if he could sell me a piece of canvas to put round my shoulders. He was unable to do this, but directed a sailor to give me an empty sack with which I protected the camera and myself as I went down the side of the steamer into the canoe. I was thankful to reach the shore even with my clothes in a somewhat wet and draggled condition, and, after paying the canoemen, was now rather at a loss to know what to do.

A young black man who had been awaiting the arrival of the canoe helped me out of my difficulties by making himself very officious, and, taking my little bag, led the way inland with offers of finding me a shelter. Passing by a considerable number of coco-nut palms which grew on the large flat near the shore, we ascended a small bare hill on which was built a substantial little house where an educated young coloured man welcomed me and introduced himself as the sub-manager of Castle Bruce estate. This was a better termination than I had any right to expect, as the man who brought me to the house was only on a visit in this vicinity, and had made himself serviceable in the expectation of a reward, which he well deserved. I now explained my object to the sub-manager, who kindly said that he would try to find me a guide and a horse to take me to Salybia when the weather improved, which was hardly likely to happen on that day, and in the meantime he lent me a change of clothes. The difficulty about eatable food now became so apparent that on two or three occasions I was obliged to buy a fowl before mealtime so that it might be cooked especially for myself.

Most of the buildings of the estate were situated on the large flat. With this exception, however, the level ground, which to an inexperienced person seems to be the most valuable land on the estate, was hardly utilized. This was, indeed, a lime plantation, and the coco-nut trees which I had taken to be the main product were merely planted for shelter, while the lime trees were growing in ravines among the surrounding hills where the ground hardly appeared to be worth cultivating, but where there was certainly much more protection against the wind which these trees do not well endure. The plantation appeared so isolated by the surrounding hills that it hardly surprised me to be told that I was the first photographer who had come there.

On the next morning, although it was still raining, the weather showed signs of clearing and before noon the sun came out. A guide and horse were now brought at a charge of nine and eight shillings respectively, by which I could see that visitors have to pay heavily for travelling in this little-known region, as we were only going eight miles and expected to return early on the following day. After following the track about a mile and a half along the lower coast-hills we came to a place known by the creole name of Jalousie, where there is a glorious view of the bay opposite Castle Bruce, and of the headland which the steamer had rounded on the previous morning. It would have made a better picture if I could have taken it from a greater distance, but the path was bounded on the inland side by a bank so thickly covered with scrub that further retreat was impossible. Our progress now became very slow owing to the nature of the ground over which the road passed, a kind of sticky yellow



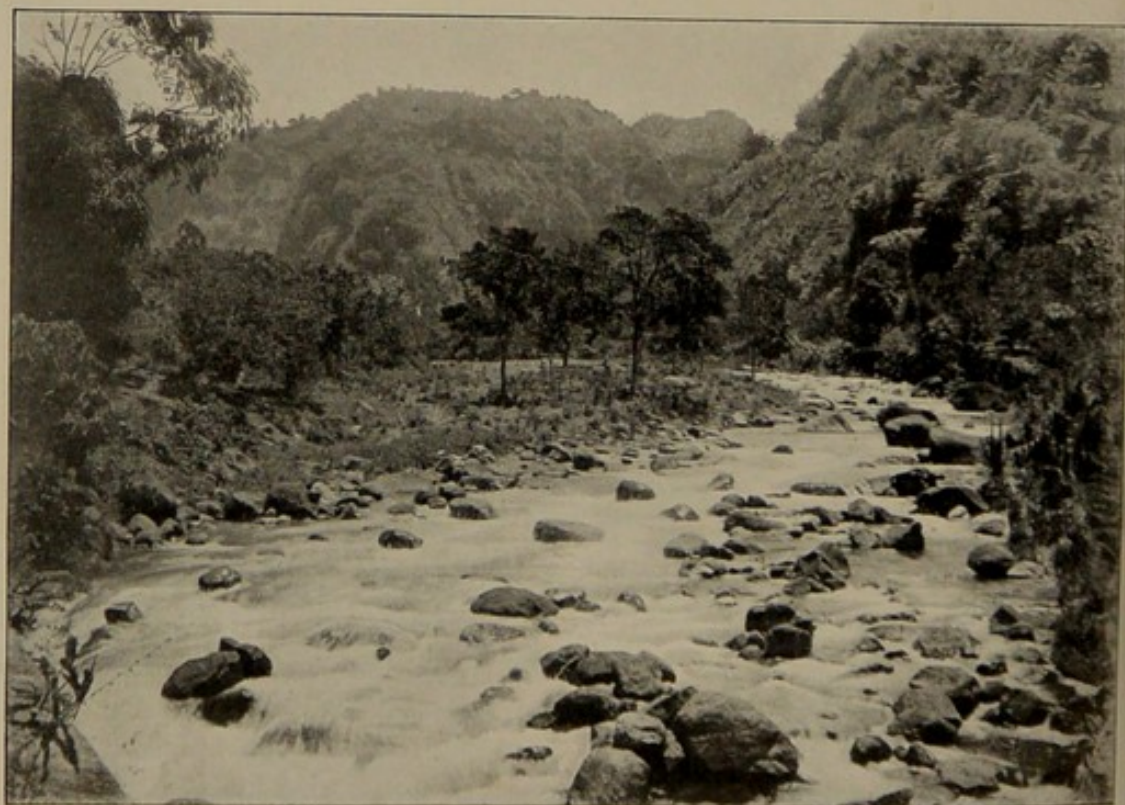


St. David's Bay, from Jalousie, near Castle Bruce.





Group of Six Caribs on the reservation at Salybia.



Gorge of Roseau River, between one and two miles from the Capital.





Young Carib Woman.







clay which had become so slippery after the rain that the weak pony I was riding used frequently to slide on it when going up or down the frequent hills and could hardly keep up to the negro who was on foot.

We must have entered the Carib reservation, which extends for a few miles along the coast, when a man, apparently from a hut just visible through the bush, came out on the road and conversed with my guide in the *patois* I could not understand. The Mongolian appearance of the newcomer made it evident that he was a Carib, besides which he had a family resemblance to some of those Mexican Indians who show signs of Asiatic origin. After travelling at least two miles further the wooden huts became more frequent, and presently my guide, who spoke English as well as *patois*, left the main track and conducted me by a small path through the trees to a cottage of more pretensions than its neighbours. He had probably been instructed to bring me here, for, on approaching the door, a woman appeared who could speak English fluently. She was, however, by no means a pure-bred Carib, having a large proportion of that negro blood with which this settlement is now being permeated. On explaining our business we were made welcome, the pony was tethered out on grass and a meal was got ready for us. Word was now sent to the people who, I was assured, would be quite willing to allow themselves to be photographed when they returned from their work at five in the afternoon.

When, however, no one came at the expected hour I began to be apprehensive that I might lose the day, as the light, even for portraits, fails in these parts soon after six, so accompanied by my guide and by the man who was evidently the owner of the house, I followed the main track about half a mile further and waited on some open ground near the church which seemed to mark the centre of the settlement. After remaining some time here I became still more anxious, for, quite apart from the lateness of the hour, the sky was now so overcast that a storm was evidently impending, and when I asked why no Caribs came I was told that they were changing their clothes after their day's work, in order to be photographed in their best! This was most exasperating, as it would have been far preferable to have taken them in their working clothes, besides which it would soon be too late to do anything. Finally, just before six, a party of Caribs arrived, dressed in their best clothes. There was no time to lose as the storm was coming up fast, and I had hardly finished when the rain came on so heavily that we had all to take shelter in a neighbouring cottage. It was almost nightfall before the rain stopped, upon which I returned to my host's cottage, hoping that one, at any rate, of the two groups taken would prove successful. With the assistance of the family, the little shanty which did duty as a kitchen was turned into a dark room by putting bagging over a large aperture, when on developing the two plates with the solution brought with me I was not very surprised to find that both were under-exposed, one having only just failed to make a good result.

The people of the house now promised to ask some more Caribs to come in the morning, and I determined to trust the success of the expedition to this last attempt, for, although there was nothing to



prevent my remaining longer except the discomfort and the expense, both of these were considerable. The cottage where I was spending the night, while considerably better than most of its neighbours, only contained two rooms. The family slept in the inner one, to which the only access was through the outer room where my guide and myself slept, so there was no such thing as privacy, and there was evidently considerable difficulty in providing me with eatable food. Then on the score of expense, the cost of guide and horse, which amounted to seventeen shillings between them, even if I returned on the following morning, would naturally be increased in proportion to my delay, besides which there was the payment due to the poor people whose cottage and food I was now using. Thus there were many reasons for hastening my departure.

Although the morning broke in a lowering manner a party of Caribs came up early to be photographed, encouraged by the recompense received by the others on the previous evening. Seven o'clock on a dark morning is not a very promising combination, still if I could only gauge the exposure, the gloom would probably show the features to better advantage than bright sunlight. Heavy rain drops were beginning to fall, but fortunately there was an open level space just outside the cottage, so directly the work was done we were able to get under shelter. The more successful of my two attempts is placed here, together with the likeness of the young Carib woman in Roseau who had been brought with the object of saving me the trouble of this expedition, and a few words may now suitably be said with reference to this interesting and fast disappearing race.

Mr. Ober, the naturalist, who visited the Caribs here and in St. Vincent some thirty years previously, remarks that, "In Dominica there are but twenty families of pure Caribs; in St. Vincent less than six; and but a few of the older men and women can speak the original language." On this reservation at Salybia there are now stated to be about three hundred Caribs, figures which do not seem in harmony with the fact that the race is becoming extinct, as this would be an enormous increase for twenty families in so short a time. The discrepancy, however, is easily explained when it is considered that the greater part of these so-called Caribs are no longer of pure stock, owing to the surviving Indians being inundated by such a quantity of negro blood that in a few years a real Carib will be a rarity and only seen among a few of the old people. The theory that in a fusion of these two races the negro will predominate is amply borne out by the history of what has already happened. Long before St. Vincent was finally subjugated by the British, when most of the surviving natives were deported to a distant island on the coast of Central America, negroes, probably escaped slaves, had taken refuge among the Caribs, with the result that two distinct divisions of the people were already formed, the black Caribs of mixed ancestry and the yellow Caribs of pure descent. The black Caribs, however, represented the dominant race and had to a great extent displaced their countrymen of purer breed.

What has happened, therefore, in the case of a limited number of negro refugees is taking place even more effectually on a reservation like Salybia surrounded by people of African race. In the former volume it has been mentioned how a Spanish-American, in endeavour-



ing to prove the superiority of his Indian fellow-countrymen over negroes, stated that, if Indian blood were crossed two or three times with European, the progeny appeared to be of pure white race, thereby bringing forward unconsciously a proof that the American-Indian race is not a pure one. If then the Indians of Spanish-America so soon assimilate themselves to pure white stock, they are at least as likely to resemble negroes when mixed with so virile a race as that of the African. Certainly the people of mixed blood on this settlement showed greater affinity with the negro than with the American-Indian, the negro part of their descent being apparent, while that of their Carib ancestry was a matter of family history and less visible. Here then is an instance of a native race which has survived a long warfare with a higher civilization, only to become exterminated by having the negro, so to say, dumped down upon upon it. Few, if any other, American-Indians show such a marked resemblance to the Mongolian type as these Caribs, and although their characteristics would probably change as much with an infusion of European blood, as it certainly has with African, it appears that Chinese blood is so kindred that its influence is hardly noticeable. In proof of this Mr. Ober, in his "Camps in the Caribbees," cites the following instance: "A Chinaman—pure Mongolian—had married a yellow Carib. Their progeny, a numerous family of children, could not be distinguished from the Indian children around them." In the face of such an Asiatic resemblance it is difficult to come to the conclusion that the Caribs originated in South America, although they appear to have invaded the islands from that continent.

Of the six Caribs in the photograph perhaps those who show the most decided Mongolian type are the two men at each side of the group. The woman, however, shows it also to a considerable degree, and I was told that the only one who did not look like a Carib was the man sitting in the centre. The young woman, afterwards photographed by herself in Roseau, is also a good type, appearing to be a true Mongolian with her yellow skin, round face, almond-shaped eyes, flat nose, and straight black hair. She is short, strongly built and what may be called bull-necked. This daughter of a long line of warriors had deserted the native settlement for the pacific employment of working in a cookshop at Roseau. While, however, the Caribs still linger, almost all their distinctive customs have been merged into those of the French-speaking negroes who are absorbing them. Formerly being said to have two languages, one for the men and another for the women, they now only speak French *patois* and their clothing in no way differs from that of the negroes. They fish and till the ground like the other islanders, but still retain their skill for making baskets, which they periodically bring to Roseau to sell.

It will be noticed that the woman in the group wears her hair done up under a kerchief, after the manner of a West Indian negress, while the young Carib in Roseau has her hair let down in two plaits, like most of the American-Indians, and this discrepancy must be explained. Although the Carib women now wear their hair done up under the kerchief, I had noticed in a picture in Mr. Ober's book that they were represented with their hair hanging down in the orthodox Indian fashion, so I asked by means of an interpreter if this really



used to be the custom, and, on being assured that such was the case, I got the girl to let her hair down, partly from a desire to find out whether it was long and straight. It was certainly quite straight and if not as long as that of an Indian on the continent it must be remembered that, even in Mexico, the Indians who live in the *tierra caliente* near the coast cannot grow hair as long as those who live on the cool tableland. Women of pure Carib blood could, of course, continue to wear their hair in this manner, only for wishing to follow the prevailing West Indian fashion, but after a certain amount of negro blood has been mixed with their Indian ancestry it would be impossible for them to do so, as their hair would become too short and "woolly." So they have merely anticipated a change which would have been necessary in a few more generations.

I now recompensed my Negro-Carib hostess and commenced the return journey with my guide over the muddy road, which made travelling wearisome for man and horse, arriving at Castle Bruce early in the afternoon. The difficulty in obtaining what most people would call the necessities of life made me anxious to return to Roseau as soon as possible, although it was not so easy to decide how this should be done. The next steamer was not due for several days, and even then might have no cargo for Castle Bruce, in which case it would not stop, or the sea might then be too rough for a canoe to go out into the bay. It would be better to cut the matter short by walking across the island, but I could not undertake a journey through such wild country without a competent guide, so in my dilemma I consulted with the sub-manager. His plan bade fair to put an end to my difficulties. There was, he said, an old road from Roseau which passed through the bush some two or three miles at the back of Castle Bruce. He would lend me a mount as far as the road and provide me with a guide who would conduct me on foot for the rest of the way, some twenty-three miles. The road was said to go round the mountains and not over them, so the journey might easily be done in a day. This seemed too good an offer to be refused and it was settled that the guide was to come to the house on the following morning. On arrival, however, he shattered my hopes by saying that the road was under water in places and that there were bogs to be crossed, which would make the journey impossible for anyone who could not go barefoot like a negro or walk all day in boots soaked with mud and water.

Another alternative was now presented. Castle Bruce is eleven miles north of Rosalie on the eastern coast. If I could reach Rosalie there was a good track over the mountain range from there to Roseau, sixteen miles on the other side of the Island. The question was how to get a lift as far as Rosalie, as the entire distance of the two sections, some twenty-seven miles, which included the ascent of a steep range, would be rather a severe trial of pedestrianism. Horses did not seem plentiful and my experience with the weak pony which had carried me to Salybia was not encouraging. My host suggested a canoe, an idea which I welcomed as affording a nice easy passage of the first eleven miles by water, leaving me fresh to cross the Island on foot. The passage in the canoe would only cost four shillings, which seemed a very moderate price. I now found that the black man who



had brought me to the house on my first arrival also wished to return to Roseau, so it was arranged that he should act as my guide. He was a very good fellow, Charles by name, and English-speaking, although he seemed quite proficient in *patois* as well. We now collected our few effects, when the sack which the officer on the steamer had lent me proved again useful in carrying some food for our long day's journey.

The sub-manager now accompanied us to the shore. While, however, a large canoe was being run down the stony beach by some ragged negroes, an expression was used which led me to doubt that four shillings was the inclusive price of the journey. On asking for particulars I found that my suspicions were correct and that the natives have a peculiar way of estimating the cost of a passage which is very misleading to strangers. The canoe required a crew of three men, the chief of whom is called the captain. The *journey* only cost four shillings, but it was customary to pay in addition so much for *each oar* and so much for *the captain*, so that the total charge would amount to eight shillings. It is always annoying to find that your journey is going to cost twice the anticipated price. I had, however, a more urgent reason for being dissatisfied in the fact that my expenses had been so much greater than anticipated, that I had not quite eight shillings left to pay the canoemen on arriving at Rosalie. The sub-manager then informed me that if I went in a small canoe the entire cost would be included in six shillings, as there would be one oar less and no captain to pay. "You will not travel so comfortably," he said rather ominously, "but you will get there." It was consoling to be assured that we should eventually reach our destination, even without so important a person as the captain, for by this time the voyage on a rough sea in so frail a conveyance was assuming a serious aspect. The new arrangement, however, enabled me to pay the men at the end of the journey, so the large canoe was hauled up on the beach and a small one was run into the water. My black fellow-passenger Charles and myself sat on the low seats of the rickety little craft while the two ragged negroes who formed the crew climbed in as we were being pushed out from the shore.

There is so much surf on the windward side of these islands that before we had gone many hundred yards out in the bay we had already been heavily splashed, and I began to see that my "nice easy passage" was a delusion, so wrapping the useful sack round the camera I only hoped that our troubles might be limited to discomfort and that we might eventually land at Rosalie. We had to double round the headland to our right, the same as that which appears in the photograph taken at Jalousie, and I consoled myself with the idea that when we had got clear of the shore our passage would become smoother. The crests of the waves did not, perhaps, lap over the sides of the canoe so often when we had gone round the headland, but the long Atlantic rollers looked very formidable as they reared themselves apparently at least eight feet above our seats near the bottom of the canoe. Each time they approached it looked as if our little cockle-shell of a craft was going to be swamped; each time, however, we rode triumphantly over them, receiving occasionally a pint or two of water before we disappeared in the hollow trough between



the roller which had passed towards the shore and the one which was nearing us from the windward side. Although our course lay only from half a mile to a mile from the rock-bound coast, the comparative vicinity of land gave little consolation on the score of safety, as whatever chance a strong swimmer might have of reaching the shore, in case our frail conveyance should be wrecked, it would require little less than a miracle to pass alive over or round the rocks against which the angry sea dashed. Possibly the canoemen might know of some safe passages, but a stranger would never find them. I now blamed myself for having undertaken such an adventure. Several times in Spanish-America I had, so to say, held my life in my hands ; on these occasions, however, it was almost always in the course of earning my daily bread, while I was now wantonly exposing myself to danger. My principal consolation lay in the conduct of the canoemen, who were paddling skilfully on the unstable surface of the water. These negroes, ragged and half naked though they were, did not come out to be drowned for six shillings.

When we had gone a mile or two a new phase introduced itself which decidedly mitigated any apprehension about shipwreck. Neptune is a monarch who requires undivided allegiance, and those who are thinking of paying tribute to him will have little inclination for devoting their attention to other matters. The continual pitching of the canoe had induced a feeling of giddiness in the head, together with certain other premonitory symptoms which made me comparatively careless whether the canoe were upset or not. This uncomfortable feeling, however, subsided to a great extent and I was able to keep an impassive exterior. My black companion, Charles, a landsman like myself, was even more affected and began to swallow salt water, which among the negroes is considered to be a preventive against sea-sickness, to the intense amusement of the jeering canoemen. After a time we hoisted a tiny sail, which, however small, made us move faster than the paddles of the men, who were now able to rest, except for baling out the water from time to time. At last, when the greater part of the journey had been completed, I could see a few huts on the shore ahead of us, and asked with a somewhat affected carelessness whether this was Rosalie. I was much relieved to hear from Charles that it was, as the canoemen only spoke *patois*. We now approached the landing-place, a perpendicular rock with a side like a wall against which the rollers dashed. When the water receded this rock stood about eight feet out of the sea, but when the next roller advanced the water welled up to the level of the rock's flat surface, and we availed ourselves successfully of this moment for jumping ashore while the canoe was thus lifted. After several failures I now managed to hand the canoemen their well-earned six shillings, on receiving which they waved a farewell and commenced their homeward journey.

My guide and myself still felt what can only be called rather light-headed after our tossing of about three hours in the canoe, so we rested a short time at the landing-place where a large boat lay under the shelter of a shed, and soon recovered sufficiently to enjoy a comfortable smoke before we continued our journey. There was, however, no time to lose as it was already past mid-day and we had



in front of us a walk of sixteen miles, including the fording of three rivers and the crossing of the range. We now walked over a few hundred yards of flat coast country on which were built some rather miserable-looking negroes' huts, apparently comprising the greater part of the settlement, and passing by a large deserted stone building looking like a disused factory, we came upon the Rosalie River a little above where it flows into the sea. It was now necessary to strip to the shirt so as not to get our clothes wet in wading across, as the river, at all times a considerable body of water, had been lately swollen with rain. The water did not perhaps rise above our hips, but ran so strongly that we were only just able to keep our footing, and I envied my companion who, accustomed to walk barefoot, was not troubled like myself by the rough stones which formed the river's bed. Pedestrians will in future be spared this annoyance, for, a little above where we crossed, a bridge was being built. We could have walked little more than another half mile before coming to the next river, which caused another delay by obliging us to take off all our clothes except the shirt. While we were wading through the swiftly-flowing current I lost my footing on a large loose stone, but before going down I had time to hand my boots to Charles and partly saved myself with my hand at the expense of a wet shoulder; the precious sack, however, which among other things contained our dinner, happened to be on the other side and remained quite dry.

There was only one more river to cross, from five to six miles further on, so we could now settle down to steady walking. I had trusted Charles with the camera and only carried its stand. My coat, generally a useless encumbrance on a tropical journey, had been stuffed into the sack, and in the absence of any waistcoat, the soft cotton shirt, pulled down like a tunic outside my thin washing trousers, completed my serviceable costume, with the exception, of course, of hat and boots. The weather, which would not have been pleasant for a holiday outing, was very suitable for foot-travelling in these hot countries, being dull and somewhat showery, without any excessive downpour. At first there was nothing remarkable in the ascent or in the scenery, which can hardly be called tame in any part of Dominica. Occasionally a negro saluted us on the track with a courteous "*Bonjour*," or now and then a hut might be seen through the trees; but we did not venture to stop, even to eat, as the third watercourse went by the ominous name of the Grand River, and Charles was apprehensive that if we delayed it might rise too high to be crossed, in which case we might have to return to one of these huts or even to Rosalie for a night's shelter, a termination too dreadful to be contemplated by one who had set his heart on resting in comfort at Roseau on that very evening. About six miles from Rosalie the track crosses the Grand River, a comparatively narrow mountain stream, but swiftly-flowing and almost as deep as the previous ones. We had not seen a human habitation for the last few miles and had already reached a sufficient elevation to make such a marked change in the plant life around us that I thought we might have reached the top of the range, especially as the ascent had been less steep lately. Charles, however, assured me that we had not arrived there yet, a fact which I soon found out myself, as by far the most arduous part of the mountain pass lies between the Grand River and the watershed, two miles farther on.



In our ascent we now invaded that damp fern region only met in the tropics at a considerable altitude. The zigzag track cut in the rock now doubled back on itself so sharply in places that whichever of us was in front or behind frequently saw the other walking in almost the opposite direction on the terrace below or above him, and from time to time we were glad to pause for a few seconds to gain our breath as we climbed the perpetual hill. From the cutting on the upper side of the track ferns hung over in places, and little springs gushed out and ran along the rocky foot-way until the soles of my boots became pulpy from walking in a minute watercourse. On the lower side were long slopes covered with gigantic ferns which seemed to have taken the place of trees, but the atmosphere was too much charged with moisture to see far. Nature was silent, and everything lay shrouded in the grey mist.

When we reached the top of the range the worst part of our journey had been done. Charles showed me the stone which indicated that we were eight miles from both Rosalie and Roseau, but the second part of the journey was nearly all downhill, and there were no more rivers to ford. We now made a halt to eat our well-earned dinner, and never were some scraps of indifferent bread and meat, washed down with mountain water, more thoroughly appreciated. During mealtime we sheltered ourselves from the mist in a niche which had been cut into the rock on the upper side of the track, the rest-house in the vicinity being in a ruinous condition. The height of the range where it is crossed by the road is said to be about three thousand feet, and Mount Watt in the vicinity is marked as something over four thousand, several hundred feet less than Mount Diablotin in the northern part of the Island.

Before we commenced the descent on the Roseau side, I asked Charles to show me the mountain-lake which lies close here on the top of the range, and within a short distance of our halting-place he pointed it out to me from the roadside. It appeared to be only two or three hundred yards from the track, down a slope which was thickly covered with undergrowth. The lake is quite small, only a large pond surrounded by thick foliage of a scrubby nature, and was so concealed by the mist which hung everywhere, but especially over the surface of the water, that it would have been easy on such a day to pass by without noticing it. Charles gave it the extraordinary name of the *female* lake, and said that its waters ran down on the Roseau side; while the *male* lake, somewhere close beside its companion, emptied itself on the opposite side of the range. "But," said Charles, looking in the direction of the *female* lake, and evidently thinking that I had photographic intentions on it (or her), "I don't consent to go down there." He need not have been afraid that I should have asked him, for, much as I would have given to obtain a likeness of so interesting a subject, the misty state of the atmosphere made photography impossible.

But why did he call it the *female* lake, and what was the reason that so obliging a lad should refuse, even before he was asked, to go so short a distance out of the direct road? If it seems strange now that I did not ask these questions, it must be remembered that the day was a hard one, spent in action rather than in words. I



remember, however, that my kind hostess in Roseau had given me a vague warning about the lake, saying that a stranger who had been lost was last seen close to its margin. Charles's reason may have been simply that the ground was boggy, and the bushes were certainly dripping with wet; or perhaps there may have been some superstition connected with this female clad in mist.

Our downward course was easy in comparison with our former labours; even now, however, it was not safe to go very fast, for, on trying to put on a good pace, I slipped on a thin coating of mud on the rock and fell backwards, only partially saving myself with my hand. It was fortunate, indeed, that my companion was carrying the camera, otherwise it might have been broken. Charles, in walking barefoot, had the same advantage over me in boggy ground that an ox has over a horse. While my foot, encased in a boot, slipped on the mud in going downhill, Charles's great toe spread out from the rest of his foot like a cloven hoof, and the wedge of mud which entered this gap offered a reliable resistance. Although the mist began to clear as we descended the range, we were caught in one or two showers when about halfway down, and sheltered under some thick foliage, which proved a rather insufficient protection. If, however, we had never been thoroughly dry during the day, neither had we ever become altogether wet, as the mist had only been sufficient to keep us damp, and the cool weather enabled us to walk continuously without being drenched in perspiration, as is too often the case. The track now ran along the right bank of the Roseau River, near which a few scattered houses might be seen in the uplands where the ground was not too rugged for cultivation.

As the gorge opened out it took the appearance presented in the photograph of the river, in fact, we passed this very spot about a mile and a half from the town. Soon afterwards the descent had virtually ceased, and our last mile lay on a comparatively flat road which passed through a lime plantation.

The sun had now set but it was still daylight, and I felt that my dress or rather undress was attracting attention. Roseau, however, is neither a very large town nor has it become so British that a stranger is subject to uncomplimentary remarks from the negroes if he refuses to play the part of the ideal tourist, so we strode silently through the streets like explorers returning from unknown regions until we arrived at my comfortable lodging, where I received a kindly welcome. Never did a man pay his guide with greater goodwill than I gave Charles the four shillings which was his promised reward. Without his aid my boots would have become wet when I stumbled in the river and might even have been lost, while if I had been carrying the camera when I fell backwards it would probably have been damaged. The company also of a person who knows the way in wild country is invaluable, especially when there are such unknown dangers as *female lakes*.

The Carib settlement at Salybia appears to be hardly more than fifteen miles from Roseau in a straight line, yet in order to reach it I had made a sea voyage of at least six hours, which even allowing for a few short stoppages cannot well be put down at less than forty miles, besides riding another eight. While on the return, the distances were



eight miles on horse, eleven in canoe and sixteen on foot, thirty-five miles in all. Such is travelling in Dominica! The expedition had only lasted four clear days, yet in point of incident it rivalled my trip into the interior of Haiti.

In some of our northern regions so much exposure to wet might have caused undesirable after-effects, but in the glorious West Indian climate the only result was a little stiffness and chafing, and almost the first use which I made of my rested limbs was to go to the steamer's office in order to return the sack which had proved so useful in its double capacity of waterproof and food-carrier.



## CHAPTER XVIII.

## IN DOMINICA.

A VISIT to the Boiling Lake and to the hot sulphurous springs in its vicinity would have made an expedition worthy of comparison with that of the preceding chapter. I abandoned the project, however, chiefly on the score of expense, as it costs much more to engage guides expressly for a service than to pay a few shillings for the company of someone who is travelling on his own account in your direction. The naturalist, Mr. Ober, who saw this lake—a small geyser, whose dimensions have been given as from one hundred feet upwards—represents one of his guides as saying, "Have attention where you make your feet." Unlike the naturalist, however, I was travelling at my own expense and had to economize my resources for visiting other islands.

The most interesting settlement near Roseau is Soufrière, five miles further south on the western coast. The little fishing village of Michelle which lies about halfway between the two places is connected with Roseau by a good level road along the sea front, lined by a pretty fringe of coco-nut palms. Beyond Michelle, however, the road winds back among the hills until it comes out at Soufrière, to avoid going round the rugged promontory which forms one side of the bay. I had already been to Michelle and now wished to try what this hilly region was like, hoping to find some view worth taking.

Nature displays itself on a large scale in Dominica, where the rugged mountains and valleys look as if they had been rent by volcanic convulsions, and the grandeur of the scenery resembles that of a continent rather than of a comparatively small island. In this respect it differs from the smaller features of its rival Grenada, whose more rounded outlines and profusion of foliage have imparted a smiling appearance. They are different types of beauty, each supreme in its own way. Many views, however, which look grand to the eye are quite unsuitable for photography, as on the present occasion when I had walked several miles without having seen anything sufficiently good to tempt me. I had already ascended the coast-hills by the winding inland road from Michelle and was now walking on a stretch of level elevated ground before descending on the Soufrière side. To the left lay the high lands of the interior, to the right the rugged slopes cleft with large ravines stretched right down to the sea, while occasionally a distant view of the long narrow headland on the further side of Soufrière Bay might be seen through the trees.

I had met no one in this solitary region and was just beginning to think that the day would pass without any incident worth recording,



when something attracted my attention to a spot about twenty yards down the steep incline on the coast side of the track. Among the small trees and bushes which clothed the wild hillside were three girls, who were filling their vessels with water from a spring. I asked them if they would give me a drink, and on their assenting, climbed down beside them. One was yellow and two were black; all, however, were of comely appearance and evidently lived quite near, although it seemed strange in these hilly parts of Dominica, where rain is so plentiful, that anyone should have to go even half a mile for water. The spring, however, seemed to be held in estimation by the care taken of it. Around the spot where the water issued from the fern-covered bank, a few yards of solid masonry had been built, so that the largest utensil could be filled without waiting. The girls willingly allowed themselves to be photographed, but the hill was so steep that it was impossible to do justice to a very pretty picture. I was quite sorry to leave such a peaceful scene, as the girls enjoyed the adventure and were so contented with the few pence I gave them that I accepted the offer of the yellow one to carry the camera up to the roadside, feeling that it would be safer with her than with me.

I now continued my journey in search of views along the descent towards Soufrière, the ground becoming so broken that I had no inclination to leave the steep and winding track, where a pedestrian is much more safe than a man on horseback. In the distance there was a glimpse of Soufrière Bay, which gave promise of rewarding me for my trouble, if I could only get clear of the surrounding trees; the path, however, took such a zigzag course in its descent that there was always some obstacle in the way. Would these trees spoil the view to the last? The bay was now so close underneath me that if I did not do something soon the chance would be gone. When little more than a quarter of a mile from the settlement I came to a place where there were only two or three coco-nut palms between me and the glorious scene. These trees, however, although beautiful, do not appear to advantage unless their entire length is seen, and one of these lay so immediately below me that the lower part of its stem was invisible from the path. I looked anxiously at the cutting above me, which was fairly clear of bushes for about the first eighteen feet and, if I did not mind risking a fall with the camera, the elevation and open space might give me the advantage I desired. From this situation there was, in fact, just enough foreground for the central tree, and I was fortunate enough to accomplish my object without damage to my apparatus. In this view Soufrière Bay has the appearance of a lake with the bluff on its opposite side. I now walked quickly into Soufrière, somewhat doubtful as to what kind of refreshment might be obtainable after my roundabout journey of about eight miles, besides photographic deviations. Close beside the church there was a rather superior-looking house, where some cocoa beans were being dried on trays in front of the door. When I asked for information here, the owner, Mr. Etienne, a black man of great size, kindly invited me inside to take some refreshment, and on my asking if there would be any chance of getting a passage back to Roseau in a canoe, he informed me that one was going to start almost imme-



diately, and brought me down to the shore himself so that I might arrive in time. He drew my attention to the sulphur springs which were bubbling into the bay just under the surface of the beach, and directed me to put my hand into the sea, which was distinctly warm from the hot water running into it.

Travelling by canoe on this leeward side of the Island is a very different thing to what it is on the windward coast, where the usual conditions have already been described. Between Soufrière and Roseau, indeed, canoes are constantly plying with passengers, who find an easy mode of transit on the smooth water. This comparative calmness of the sea is, of course, the reason why so many of the principal settlements in the smaller West Indian Islands lie on the western coast. The five miles' passage to Roseau only took about one hour. We touched the shore at Michelle, where a boy was sent with a message, and took him on board again a few hundred yards farther on.

I was rather pleased with my visit to Soufrière and had arranged with Mr. Etienne to photograph the drying of the cocoa in front of his house on the occasion of my next visit. So in a few days' time I went down to the sea-front to make inquiries about hiring a canoe, when I found myself surrounded by several young negroes of the loafer class, some of whom had actually made their headquarters beside the office of the steamship company, where they loiter and play cards under a shed. They were English-speaking, so perhaps they were importations, and if so, very undesirable ones, showing a decided inclination to jeer at me, while just keeping on the safe side of the law. While I was considering how I could put a stop to their offensive behaviour someone whispered, "He walked over from Rosalie in an afternoon." This short sentence acted like a charm, appealing to the instinct of the rough, who only respects physical force, and they troubled me no more. Eventually I hired a canoe; the expedition, however, was a failure, as Mr. Etienne was not at home and there were difficulties about photographing his house and cocoa to advantage during his absence, nor could I find any site which showed Soufrière to such advantage as on the first occasion.

My kind hostess now suggested that I should visit the cocoa plantation of a relative who lived near Soufrière. The owner whom I saw at her house liked the idea of having his place photographed, so it was arranged that I should go by canoe to Soufrière, where he would meet me. On the appointed day Mr. Parry Bellot met me at the landing-place to conduct me to his estate, Bois Cotlette, which lies about two miles inland. He had brought a spare horse so that I might ride beside him, and my few effects were given to a comely negro girl who carried them on her head. The general aspect of Dominica extends even to this southern extremity of the Island, where it is little more than three miles across, and before we had travelled one mile the mountains closed in so much on either side that we were riding through a narrow valley connecting the eastern with the western coast.

In this secluded passage lies Bois Cotlette, which would be an ideal place for those who like a picturesque solitude. On the southern side of the house are hills of considerable height, while to the north



the mountains rear themselves into gigantic peaks, one of which towers behind the cocoa trees in the view taken. The comparatively level ground is only a few hundred yards across, although the cultivation extends for a considerable distance up the rising ground. It was, in fact, a glen where there was only room for one plantation at a time and where neighbours could only exist at one end or the other of the mountain pass. Owing to its situation within a mile and a half of the eastern coast, the valley is swept by the breeze from the windward side, which plays upon the trees with a sound which may vary between a murmur and a roar, pleasant at times, but perhaps melancholy for a continuance, blowing so strongly that transverse rows of larger trees have been planted in places for the purpose of sheltering the cocoa. Here I was hospitably entertained by Mr. and Mrs. Bellot, while I was looking at the surrounding country and choosing suitable places for my photographs.

This valley, indeed, may be said to be the property of the Bellot family, as we passed one of their estates before arriving at Bois Cotlette and subsequently visited three others at the opening of the passage on the windward side of the Island. The farthest of these, which stands on high ground overlooking the sea, is intimately associated by its name with the history of this family, being called Morne Rouge. It was bought and thus named by the great-grandfather of the present generation, who emigrated from that Morne Rouge in Martinique which was destroyed by volcanic eruption about the time of the St. Pierre disaster. From their new home here it is just possible to see the northern coast of Martinique, near Mont Pelé, as if to remind the emigrant's descendants of the provident action of their ancestor who abandoned the foredoomed Morne Rouge and left his family in a safer place of the same name. On this estate limes and coffee are grown, the former being the most important industry of Dominica, cocoa only taking the second place. The principal mechanical work connected with limes is the condensing of the juice for export, and I was now taken through the factory where the process was explained.

Government land can be bought in Dominica at the rate of ten shillings per acre, which seems very cheap, even in comparison with St. Lucia, where the price is twice as much. Mr. Bellot remarked in connection with this subject that the subsequent expenses of the survey and of clearing the scrub would be considerable. In any other island, however, the land would have to be cleared in like manner, only the labour in lightly populated Dominica is likely to be rather dearer than elsewhere. These humid, mountainous regions are not adapted for sugarcane, which requires a drier and more level country than places which generally register more than one hundred inches of rain in the year and sometimes attain even more than two hundred. A boy informed me that, "It rains every morning in Roseau." This, without being exactly the case, is so far true that it is a very frequent thing to have a shower; while a somewhat more comprehensive remark made by an English official in such words as, "It rains every day in Dominica" was found to be quite correct.

On our return to Bois Cotlette, after riding to the end of the valley, I devoted myself to taking the photographs. An interesting





Soufrière Bay.



Gathering Cocoa at Bois Cotlette.  
High mountains at the side of the valley.





Plantation House on Bois Cotlette.  
Cattle are being used for riding, carting and packing.



Cottage and Labourers on Bois Cotlette.



peculiarity on this estate was the breaking in of cattle to forms of labour for which other animals are generally employed. In the view of the house is seen a large bullock which is being ridden by the owner's wife, a cow has been harnessed to a cart, while the little bull, which looks like a porcupine with his back covered with long grass, has been accustomed to carry fodder in this manner. The second group in front of the cottage consists of coloured and black people on the estate, few of whom could speak any English. There was some difficulty about finding a place which afforded a good view of both the cocoa and the huge mountain cliffs behind, as these trees grow so closely together that they obstruct the view. The man in the foreground is severing a pod from the tree by means of a sharp-cutting blade at the end of a long pole, while the black girl is holding a pod, which has been cut open so that the beans may be taken out. Others are lying on the ground beside her.

My month in Dominica was now drawing to a close without my having seen much of the western coast except in its southern part between Roseau and Soufrière; so I now set out on a walk to Layou, a settlement eight miles to the north of Roseau, accompanied by my former guide Charles. The scenery along the coast here was hardly on a par with what had been seen in other parts of the Island, but I marked one or two places in case there might be time to photograph them on my return. The road comes upon the Layou River about half a mile above where it flows into the sea, where a good bridge leads to the little coast settlement on the other side. We did not, however, cross the bridge immediately, but walked up the bank of the river with the intention of seeing part of that district called Layou Flats, which has been so favourably described in Mr. Aspinall's book, "A Pocket Guide to the West Indies," in the following terms: "Very fertile and admirably adapted for the cultivation of cocoa, coffee, limes, rubber, spices, oranges, and almost every kind of tropical produce."

The central range of the Island is much lower here, with the result that the ground ascends in a more gentle incline instead of in the more abrupt manner described in the return from Rosalie to Roseau. The Roseau and Layou rivers, therefore, present entirely opposite characteristics, the former being rocky and rapidly running to the last, while the latter, in its lower part at any rate, consists of a chain of tranquil pools of water, whose banks, well covered with soil, are not hemmed in closely by a mountain pass, but slope upwards in a manner which affords a considerable area for cultivation. After following the river for a short distance, however, I had to give up the idea of going any further, owing to the long return journey in front of us. We saw, indeed, what looked like a plantation house on the hillside about a mile further on, where, perhaps, we might have been able to spend the night, but I was not sufficiently enthusiastic about the expedition to ask for hospitality, perhaps because the comparatively tame landscape did not offer any picturesque views. We now retraced our steps down the river and, crossing the bridge, followed the road about half a mile to the settlement on the coast, where we managed to obtain some refreshment. Just before starting for Roseau I found that we could be taken in a canoe as far as



Massac, about halfway back, for only two shillings, and I availed myself of the chance. The mouth of the Layou River where we embarked is a comparatively wide and deep sheet of water; the passage, however, over the bar into the sea gave the canoe a good tossing, after which there was no more trouble. We had a fellow-passenger, a young French-speaking negro, who was a telegraph repairer. He was of a sprightly disposition and inclined to play pranks, upon which the canoe-man, who did not like such frolics in the frail craft, reproved him with the words, "*Pas de bêtises*," showing that the *patois*, if somewhat unintelligible in sustained conversation, contains among its shorter expressions some which are true French. On arriving at Massac the afternoon had become overcast and there was no hope of being able to photograph a view which I had marked near here, so I treated my companions to some drink at a roadside shop before we commenced the walk home.

I suppose Charles must have told our new companion something about the journey from Rosalie to Roseau, which incited him to force the pace with the object of testing our walking capabilities, for when my guide, who was rather handicapped by carrying the camera, protested that there was no occasion for such a hurry, the active telegraph repairer looked at me with a peculiar expression, as if to say, "You can't keep up with me." The challenge was so irresistible that we walked almost at racing speed for the rest of the way, to the astonishment of the few black people we met on the road. I stipulated, however, that this competition should not continue past the bridge over the Roseau River at the entrance to the town where several people were watching, one of whom, a coloured man, shouted out as we raced up neck and neck, "The old tar is in it"; the old tar, of course, being me, for here as elsewhere one of the reasons for doing anything extraordinary is put down to being a sailor. We now walked more sedately through the streets to the door of my house where, on parting with my companions, I heard the telegraph repairer say to Charles, "*Il sait marcher*."

Poor Charles! he wanted me to take him away, and was quite disappointed to hear that I had no employment for him.

Sorry as I was to leave the house of my kind hostess, it was now necessary to say farewell to Dominica, which had already received far more than its share of my time. My gratitude is due to the photographer, Mr. Fenton, and to his wife, for their efforts in finding me such comfortable quarters, and they now continued their good offices by giving me a letter of introduction to a friend in Montserrat, the next Island in my route, where I arrived on the following day.



## CHAPTER XIX.

## IN MONTSERRAT.

MY principal inducement in stopping at Montserrat was to find out if the negroes really spoke in the manner described by the before-mentioned American naturalist, Mr. Ober, in his book called "Our West Indian Neighbors," in which, however, its writer is careful to preface his amusing story by the impersonality of "It is told," thereby declining to vouch for what seems rather like fiction.

The scene lies off the shore of Montserrat, where the heroes of the story are an Irish emigrant, who is looking over the side of the ship, and a negro in the boat below him. The following dialogue is said to take place between them :—

"Say, Cuffee, phwat's the chance for a lad ashore?"

"Good, yer honor, if ye'r not afraid of wurruk. But me name's not Cuffee, an' plase ye, it's Pat Mulvaney."

"Mulvaney? And do yez mean to say ye'r Oirish?"

"Oi do."

"The saints dayfind us! An' how long have yez been out here?"

"A matter uv tin year or so."

"Tin year! An' yez black as me hat! May the divil fly away wid me if I iver set fut on this ould oisland. Save me sowl, I tuk yez fer (*sic*) a naygur!"

A similar story is told by Mr. Alcock in his book, "Trade and Travel in South America," only the white person is German instead of Irish.

A German lady has arrived at a colony of her countrymen, and, seeing a negro, makes some remark about his colour. The negro, who understands German, addresses her most politely thus: "When you, madam, have been in this country as long as I have, you will turn black also." Whereupon the lady, terrified at such a prospect, invokes the aid of Heaven to send her home at once.

It is refreshing to hear of these simple-minded natures which are seldom found in the present times, even among Irish or Germans. The question in point, however, is whether the negroes of Montserrat really speak or spoke in the manner described.

The answer must be premised by the words of a famous surgeon, also Irish, in defining the treatment of a case, "It all depends." If the story refers to the negro of the present day, it would require a vivid imagination to find the inferred resemblance in speech, although the people certainly have a peculiar sing-song tone of voice, and may possibly use an occasional Irish expression. If, however, the



story refers to olden times it is more than probable that the negroes of this Island adopted the language, as well as the names, of the unfortunate Irish, many of whom were sent out sorely against their will. Several generations, however, have passed since then, and, as the supply of labour from Ireland did not continue while that from Africa went on for many years afterwards, the Irish element has been quite submerged. Names, however, leave their landmark long after the race which gave them has become extinct, and those in Montserrat bear a decided testimony to a former Irish occupation. The name of the black boatman who brought me to the shore was Hogan, while a man who subsequently acted as my guide was called Ryan. A large store in the town had Killikelly written over it, a village in the vicinity was known as Kinsale, and one of the principal lime factories is called O'Garra's.

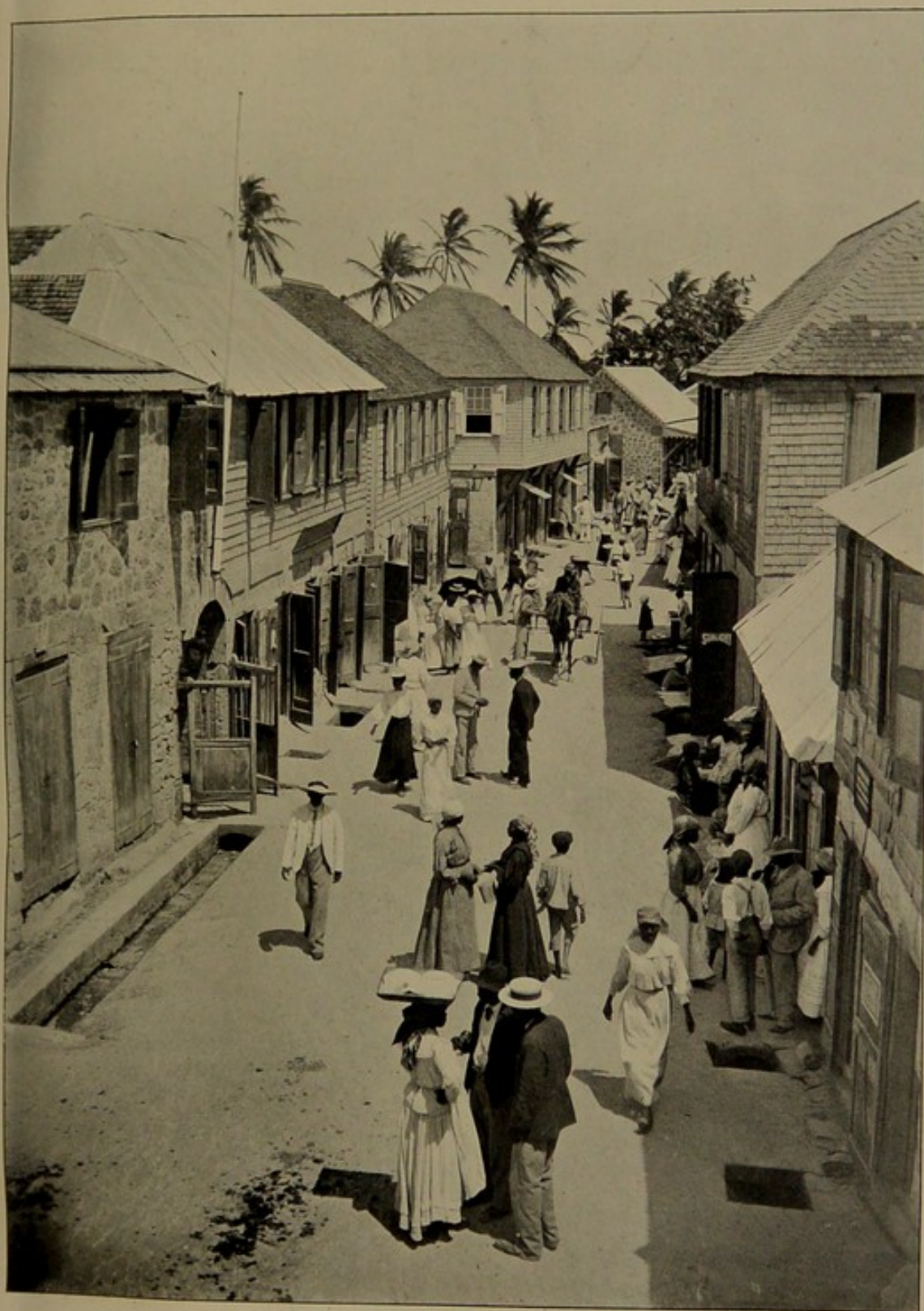
On landing at the little capital, the name of which is Plymouth, I left all my belongings temporarily in the customs-house and presented my letter of introduction at a house in the main street. The owner was absent, but his wife received me in a kindly manner, advising me to go to the house of a relation, Mr. Loving, who lived in a comfortable two-storied villa nearly a mile distant in the country, where I had every facility for developing my plates, as my host, an amateur photographer himself, had fitted up a dark room.

The area of Montserrat is twelve miles long by eight in breadth, and, like many of the smaller West Indian Islands, its surface is somewhat rugged in appearance, a large part being occupied by volcanic-looking mountains which, while of considerable height, are not imposing enough to impart a grandeur of scenery which might compensate for the barrenness of their exterior. One of these peaks called Soufrière is said to emit sulphurous fumes.

My first excursion was on horseback, with a black lad for my guide, to St. Peter's, some eight miles distant on the northern side of the Island. The first part of our journey lay inland, through somewhat bare and stony valleys between the rugged hills, until at length we came out on the sea coast, which we followed for some distance. Here we saw the dome-like Island, Redonda, some twelve miles northerly, and in the far distance the shadowy outline of a mountain rose out of the sea. This was Nevis, said to be twenty-four miles distant, although appearing rather more on the map, and it is surprising that even a glimpse of it should have been visible considering the difficulty there is in getting a good view of it from so near a vantage-ground as St. Kitts. While still on the elevated coastline, about half a mile from the sea we had a splendid view of a shoal of porpoises which were disporting themselves only a few hundred yards from the shore, not racing along in any particular direction, as is generally the case when seen from a steamer, but enjoying themselves in a watery playground of limited area. I looked at them wistfully and even my black companion became enthusiastic, asking me earnestly if I could not photograph them; the distance, however, was prohibitive.

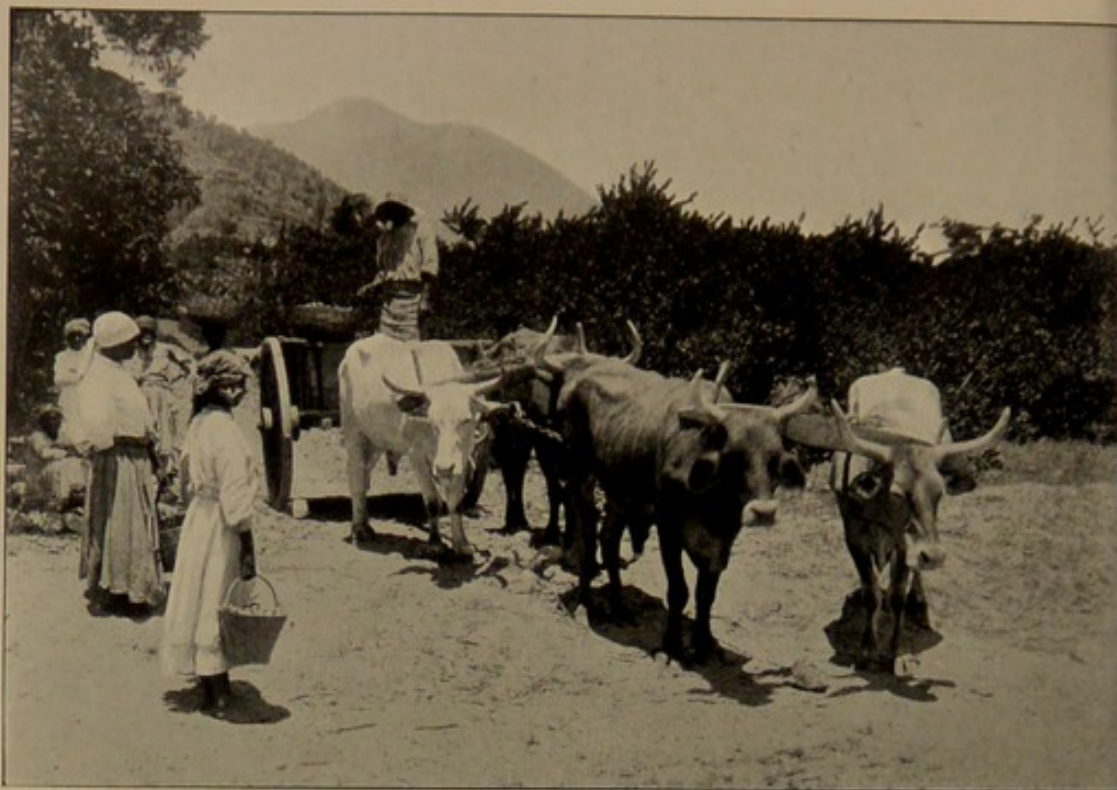
On a subsequent day I went to the neighbouring seaside village of Kinsale, which, as if to compensate for the bare aspect of the Island in many places, boasts of some patches of spreading coco-nut palms





Main Street in Plymouth, the Capital of Montserrat.





Carting Limes.



O'Garra's Lime Factory.



which impart a typical West Indian appearance to the cottages shaded by them. While I was view-hunting here, a semi-medical adventure happened to me. A coloured woman, rather of the better class, asked me to see a sick person who lived near, and, thinking it might be an urgent case, I did not like to refuse, although not now practising medicine. On entering the cottage I found an old woman whose limbs had been deformed since childhood, lying on a bed, and I remarked to the nurse who had called me in that nothing could be done for such a case. The nurse, who now became aware that she had summoned a medical man to attend a case which was obviously hopeless, was profuse in her excuses. She had only wanted a little money for the bed-ridden woman and seemed quite contented with the trifle received.

The principal commercial interest connected with Montserrat is, of course, the growing of limes and manufacture of lime-juice, the business being chiefly carried on by the Montserrat Lime Company. Not that this Island produces as many limes as Dominica, which exports a greater quantity of lime-juice. Dominica, however, grows other things as well, while Montserrat may be said to "plump" for this industry. On asking which lime-factory was the most suitable subject for a photograph, I was recommended to go to O'Garra's. By lime-factory is, of course, meant the building where the juice of the lime is expressed and concentrated for export. O'Garra's, one of the Montserrat Lime Company's estates, is only three miles from town, and the factory, which lies close to the shore, is a fine one, in spite of its severely bare aspect. The donkeys in front of the building had just been carrying gravel in panniers which are rather peculiar, being half barrels cut lengthways. I was rather surprised at the poverty-stricken appearance of some of the ground on which limes grew here, although I had already seen them in wild and rugged-looking places in Dominica, as in the ravines between the hills at Castle Bruce. On the barren-looking side of a hill, a small part of which appears in the picture of the factory, a number of these trees had been planted in a place where the soil is pierced by boulders and strewn with large stones.

One mile from the capital, on the opposite side from Kinsale and O'Garra's, lies the botanical garden. Just beyond it is a comparatively level stretch of ground which looks like one of the best agricultural localities in Montserrat, and here was a thickly planted grove of fine lime trees, the fruit of which was being gathered and carted. The fruit is piled up in heaps at the side of a track and, before it is carted away, the women take off or "rind" part of the outer covering. This lime harvest promised to make a good scene, so I awaited the arrival of a cart at a place where the women were stationed beside a pile of fruit. I was rather surprised when one of these women came up to me and asked for an *allumette*, which sounded so much more like French than Irish, that on giving her the match I could not help making the remark, "They don't speak French here!" whereupon the woman replied, "Oh, I've been six years in Dominica." When I mentioned this to Mr. Loving his opinion was just the same as my own, that the use of the French word was merely to show off a proficiency in the language, as Montserrat is essentially an English-speaking Island.



The carts which carry the limes to the factory are drawn by teams of four oxen of a peculiar long-horned breed which is generally of a yellowish-dun colour. These cattle also belong to the Montserrat Lime Company and are splendid animals. A number of them, comprising cows, calves and bulls, were being pastured by a black herdsman, who proudly said they were the finest cattle in the West Indies, and I admired them so much that I would have photographed them on the spot only for the deep shadows under the trees where they were nooning. I tried to induce the herdsman to bring the cattle to a picturesque swamp in the vicinity, covered with long reeds, but he was obliged to water them where he was ordered, and when I followed him up after breakfast to a place called Elverton's, about two miles from town, the animals had already been given their drink and became so restive on being driven a second time into the large pond that my attempt was not very successful.

Montserrat cannot fairly be called a pretty island, for although the number of mountains and hills prevent the scenery from looking tame, they are too rugged to impart the charm of typical West Indian scenery; any shortcomings, however, in this respect must be forgiven on account of the civil manner of its negro inhabitants, who perhaps have had this characteristic handed down from the Irish of former times.

After a visit of ten days I left Montserrat by a steamer of the Pickford and Black Line, on my way to St. Kitts. This boat was taking in cargo at Fox's Bay, a little beyond Elverton's. My luggage had already been sent on, and after a farewell to the kindly people with whom I had been living, I followed on foot with a negro lad for my guide. The shore presented an animated scene. Several teams of oxen had arrived to bring cargo to or from the steamer and heavily laden boats were passing between it and the land. After sitting down for some time in a primitive manner on the beach, a boat was ready to take me on board. We did not arrive at St. Kitts until nearly two days afterwards, although the distance between these two islands was hardly half of that already traversed between Dominica and Montserrat in only a day, owing to the indirect nature of our course to St. John, the capital of Antigua, on arriving at which we were no nearer to St. Kitts than when we left Montserrat.

This line of steamers can be recommended to those who like free and easy manners in the second class. In the evening the stewards came into our little saloon to have a musical and dancing entertainment of their own. There was no stiffness or formality about it, they came in their shirt sleeves to play and step-dance as long as they pleased. There was only one other male passenger besides myself, and when this kind of "aquatic smoker" began we looked at each other—and went on deck. The air of freedom blew rather strong.



## CHAPTER XX.

## IN ST. KITTS.

THE chief reason which had induced me to call at St. Kitts had been to avail myself of the comparatively frequent steam service which connects this Island with those further south, thereby shortening that part of the voyage which would have to be made in sailing ships. Basseterre, the capital and chief port, is one of the few remaining names which recall the former French occupation, the Island being now essentially English-speaking, in a manner much more easy to understand than in Montserrat, where, however, the negroes are more civil. The town, like many others in the British West Indies, presents that somewhat decayed appearance which is in a great measure due to the large number of old wooden houses; nor is it strange that such should be the case in a sugar-producing island like St. Kitts, hard hit by the depressed condition of its staple industry.

True to its name, the ground in the vicinity of Basseterre is low-lying, and probably the only place where a panoramic view can be obtained is from the church-tower, which shows the town to advantage, on account of the number of coco-nut palms which mitigate the somewhat bare aspect of the streets. In the far distance is seen Nevis, the mountain and island of that name, which is an extremely difficult subject for photography, owing to the white clouds with which its summit is so frequently covered that their likeness to snow gave the place its original name, Nieves (snows). On the day in question I had already walked about a mile from town with my guide when Nevis showed itself clearly. We returned at once, and going to the sacristan's house, obtained leave to ascend the church-tower, only to find that the fugitive Nevis was again disappearing, although still just visible.

One of my first expeditions into the country was to the other side of the Island, four miles from Basseterre by the way I travelled, and appearing on the map to be even less. The first half of the journey lay on low-lying ground through a succession of canefields, from which, as in other cane-bearing islands, almost all the native foliage has been removed; in fact, one of the few distinctive features in the landscape was a barren-looking mountain to the left. Presently, however, a perceptible rise in the ground began, although we did not cross the watershed until nearly on the other side. The dividing range, however, in this southern part of the Island is so slight that we seemed to be merely going over a grassy hill. We now saw the ocean

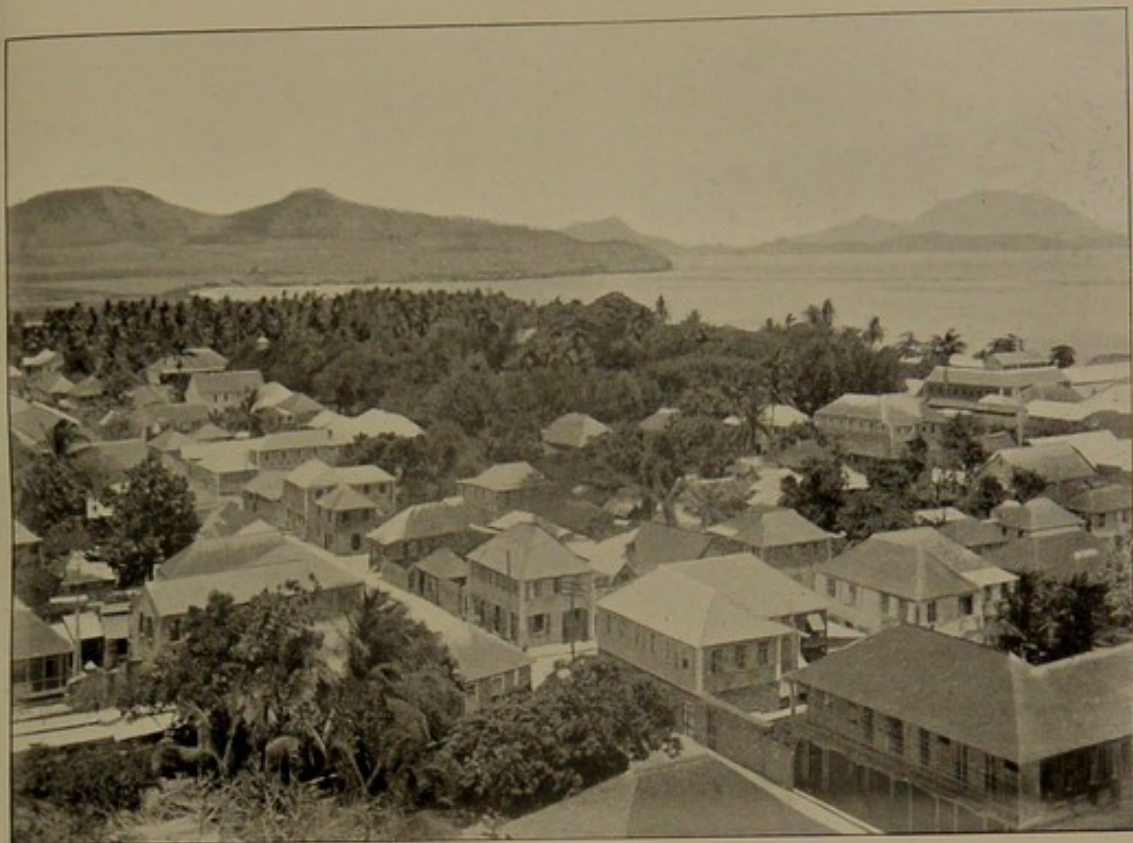


in front of us, and, as there did not seem to be anything remarkable about the scenery, I suggested to my guide, a respectable coloured lad, that we should return, but he was so anxious that we should go on to a plantation near the coast that I consented. When we arrived at this place, called Green Hill Estate, I found that the lad's father was one of the principal employees, so this was probably the reason why my guide had wished to go on. After taking a photograph of the mule-carts laden with cane in front of the factory, I was invited to rest inside a house, and was provided with some tea or coffee to take with the frugal meal which I had brought with me.

On a subsequent occasion, when I was on a road which passes through the canefields not far from Basseterre, I stopped to look at a party of negroes working, when I was so jeered at by some of the boys that I retreated quickly from what seemed to be an impossible situation. My guide, the same lad as before, gave me to understand that such treatment was of common occurrence in St. Kitts. We might have gone from a quarter to half a mile further when we came upon a negro ploughing a field on College Estate with a large team of oxen. Up to now I had no ploughing scene among my views, so I stopped to take it, and while thus occupied a man on horseback came up, presumably the manager, who, upon my saying that I hoped there was no objection to taking photographs on the estate, readily told me to take as many as I wanted. This view has been taken almost in the face of the sun in order to include the barren-looking mountain already mentioned, and this will account for the excessive contrast of light and shade upon the oxen in the foreground. We now began to return towards the town, when on passing the place where the boys had jeered at me I stopped to give them a chance of repeating the offence so that I might take some effective means of resenting it. The cunning boys, however, who had evidently seen me talking to the manager, must have been afraid of my making some complaint which would get them into trouble; as, although I waited some time, they kept working industriously without seeming to take any notice of me. Such, unfortunately, is the attitude of many of the lower-class negroes in the anglicized islands. They are quite submissive to their white employers, because work is not very plentiful, and cannot be obtained by those who are unfavourably known, but they have come to look upon white strangers who travel on foot as people of no consequence—"mean whites," in fact, to use the American term.

There is such a similarity between all sugarcane plantations in the British West Indies that a view of this industry in one island will almost serve for any other, all presenting three main characteristics—comparatively level ground, denudation of trees and the formation of large estates. If there were more factories which devoted themselves to the scientific treatment of cane bought from their neighbours after the manner of the French *usines*, a considerable difficulty would be removed from the formation of smaller estates, as people of limited means cannot produce superior sugar from want of capital to buy high-class machinery. The signs of a decline in the former prosperity of the Island are visible in the country as well as in the capital. This was exemplified on one occasion when I was deterred from taking a





Basseterre, showing Mount Nevis (to the right) in the distance.



Ploughing on College Estate.





"Cane to the door" on Olivees Estate.



Cattle Pen and View, with Mount Nevis to the right, on Olivees Estate.



photograph of a plantation by finding that some of the buildings were in a somewhat ruinous condition, and on another by finding that the house was closed owing to several plantations being under the charge of one manager. The cause is due merely to the fall in prices and not to any inferiority of the crop, for although St. Kitts was one of the least interesting of the Islands I have never seen finer looking cane than in the vicinity of Basseterre. A good sample of its luxuriant growth may be seen in the view of Olivees Estate, which I have called "cane to the door," as is literally the case. This estate, about two miles from town, is more picturesque than most of the others from being on somewhat rising ground where a view of part of the coast and of Nevis in the distance can be obtained.

During my stay of more than a week in St. Kitts I had never gone to the adjoining island, Nevis, which, however, is not quite so easy of access as would appear from the narrowness of the three-mile channel between them, the distance by steamer from Basseterre to Charlestown being about eleven miles. Neither had I ever seen Mount Misery in the northern part of St. Kitts until the ship in which I left the Island passed near it. This mountain is appropriately named, being a bare volcanic-looking mass of great size with a crater which still emits sulphurous fumes. It attains an elevation of about three thousand seven hundred feet, and is therefore slightly higher than Nevis.

It will be remembered that the next Island on my list was Saba. After many inquiries, however, I could hear of no ship going there for a considerable time, so I reluctantly abandoned the idea and prepared to go to St. Martin instead. This latter part of my journey was invested with a special interest from the primitive manner of making voyages in small sailing ships, which, if necessitating hardships not often encountered by the modern traveller, offer in return an acquaintance with remote and imperfectly known places.

I now embarked in the little sloop "Lion," which was leaving Basseterre for Philipsburg, the capital of the Dutch part of St. Martin, paying the very moderate price of one dollar for a passage of about forty miles. We were to have started at eight in the morning, but were delayed by some of the captain's female relations, who did not come on board in time. Eventually we got away about two hours later and coasted pleasantly for more than ten miles under the shelter of the western side of St. Kitts, whose entire length is about twenty miles. Towards its north-western extremity we had a good view of the bare and desolate-looking Mount Misery, as we passed close under a projecting spur called Brimstone Hill, on which the ruins of old fortifications are distinctly visible from the sea. In this northern and broader part of the Island a considerable amount of its area is occupied by this large mountain. So far we had sailed pleasantly enough, but on leaving the shelter of the Island, the sea, without exactly being rough, caused our little craft to pitch a good deal, and I now found I had made a great mistake in leaving the small parcel containing my lunch in the cabin, which was now occupied by the presumed sea-sick ladies who had come on board. I could not intrude upon them and soon felt too uncomfortable myself to get up from my seat on deck, so I had to wait the whole



day without anything to eat. We passed at least three islands in our course, St. Eustatius (Statia), Saba, and towards the end of the voyage, St. Barts. I looked wistfully at Saba, a mountain rising abruptly out of the sea a good many miles to our left, and regretted that I had been unable to visit a place which even in the neighbouring islands is considered a curiosity.

It was still daylight when we entered the bay at Philipsburg between two rugged headlands. The little sloop had done her forty miles in eight hours.



## CHAPTER XXI.

## IN ST. MARTIN.

ON arriving at Philipsburg, the capital of the Dutch part of St. Martin, the traveller will be recompensed for the inconvenience of the journey by seeing what most of us are sufficiently Athenian to appreciate—"something new"—and those who have become weary of the repetition of the same industry in different islands will welcome the new theme of salt which is all prevailing in this locality. We anchored near the sandy beach upon which the town is built in a long narrow line which extends transversely on either side towards the hills which form the harbour. These hills, somewhat parallel at first, close in towards each other at a distance of rather more than a mile behind the town, thus bounding the salt-pans on all sides except the sea-front.

The first impression conveyed on landing is the extreme civility of the people which pervades all classes, from the few cosmopolitan whites to the poorest negroes, and which cannot be attributed to the courtesy of a foreign language, as in both the Dutch and French parts of St. Martin English is usually spoken, although occasionally an official may show by his accent that it is not his mother-tongue. At the customs-house my luggage was passed through quickly by the Dutch official and I was then brought to what seemed to be the only hotel in the place, a one-storied wooden building of fair size in the front street. There are so few visitors in these out-of-the-way places that the small hotels partake rather of the nature of lodgings, and during my stay I almost always had my meals by myself. The lady of the house, of English name, but of mixed nationality, was a genial person who did her best to make the place comfortable. The means at her disposal, however, were somewhat limited in a barren little island which produces few fruits and vegetables and where even fresh meat is not always obtainable, so that the host is often obliged to eke out the natural resources of the place with preserved food. In the absence of other supply, tank water is used, which in our house was stored from the dripping of a shingle roof, thereby imparting a yellow colour and peculiar taste. The daily charge for these somewhat attenuated luxuries was one dollar and a half (six shillings and threepence), but, so far from the beaten track where a stranger is thankful to find any shelter, even higher prices are often asked.

On the following morning I crossed the strip of ground between the sea-front and the salt-pans, an interval so narrow that there is only room for two transverse streets of small wooden houses on the sandy



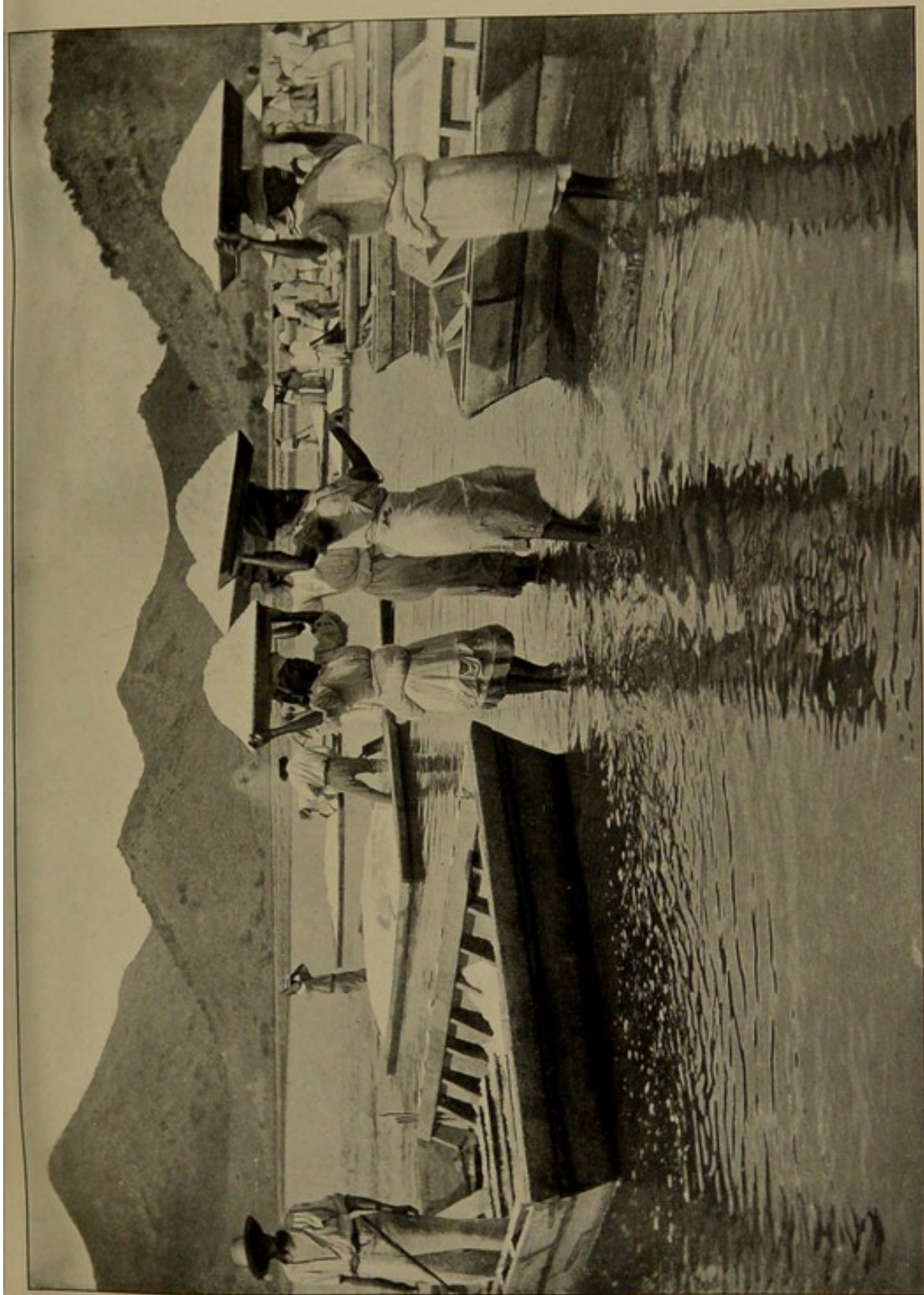
waste, and now found myself overlooking the area of the salt industry, a somewhat circular lagoon about three miles round by one across, on the banks of which, near where I was standing, several large mounds of salt were piled up, awaiting the arrival of ships to be exported. This lagoon communicates, of course, with the sea, otherwise the shallow water would soon run dry, but the whole area is kept under control so that the water is subdivided by a number of dikes into a series of pans in which evaporation continues until the super-saturated fluid precipitates the salt. The difference in the density of the brine in these pans causes a corresponding difference in the colour of the water, which assumes a bright pink colour when it is "making" salt, as the process of precipitation is here called. Seldom does a traveller behold a scene which can be looked upon from such directly opposite points of view. The water is almost surrounded by hills whose considerable height and peaked outlines suggest that this is one of those regions of mountain and lake scenery which are among the most beautiful the world can offer, but, when the eye is taken from the distant view, it becomes painfully aware of the desolation in the more immediate neighbourhood. The hills, indeed, while containing little in the way of ordinary vegetation, such as trees, bushes or grass, are abundantly supplied with prickly-pear, which in tropical countries is often found in barren regions. Rocks and stones crop up everywhere in the rising ground and only a few stunted bushes grow on the small strip of level country round this miniature Dead Sea, whose shores, with this exception, are absolutely bare.

A large number of black people, both men and women, find employment in this salt industry, the procedure of which is as follows: When the shallow water within a certain dike has precipitated its salt, a gang of women, superintended by a black man, enter the enclosure and with their hands scoop up the salt, which is then put into small rafts, called flats, and conveyed by men to a landing place on the dike, where it is dug out of the rafts and left until a considerable quantity has accumulated. It is then transferred to larger rafts and punted by men across the lagoon to the back of the town. When the rafts have reached the shore as nearly as the shallow water will allow them, the salt is again dug out and put into baskets, which are carried on the heads of the women from the rafts to the salt-heaps on the shore of the lagoon. Here it remains until a ship comes for a cargo. The carrying of the salt from the rafts to the salt-heap made a very animated picture which required a rather more rapid apparatus than that at my disposal, one of my best negatives taken in one-twenty-fifth of a second being spoiled through showing movement.

This industry causes Philipsburg to be a much more stirring place than Marigot, the capital of the French part, although the latter nation owns rather more than half of the Island, the population of which has been given as nearly eight thousand, and the area as thirty square miles.

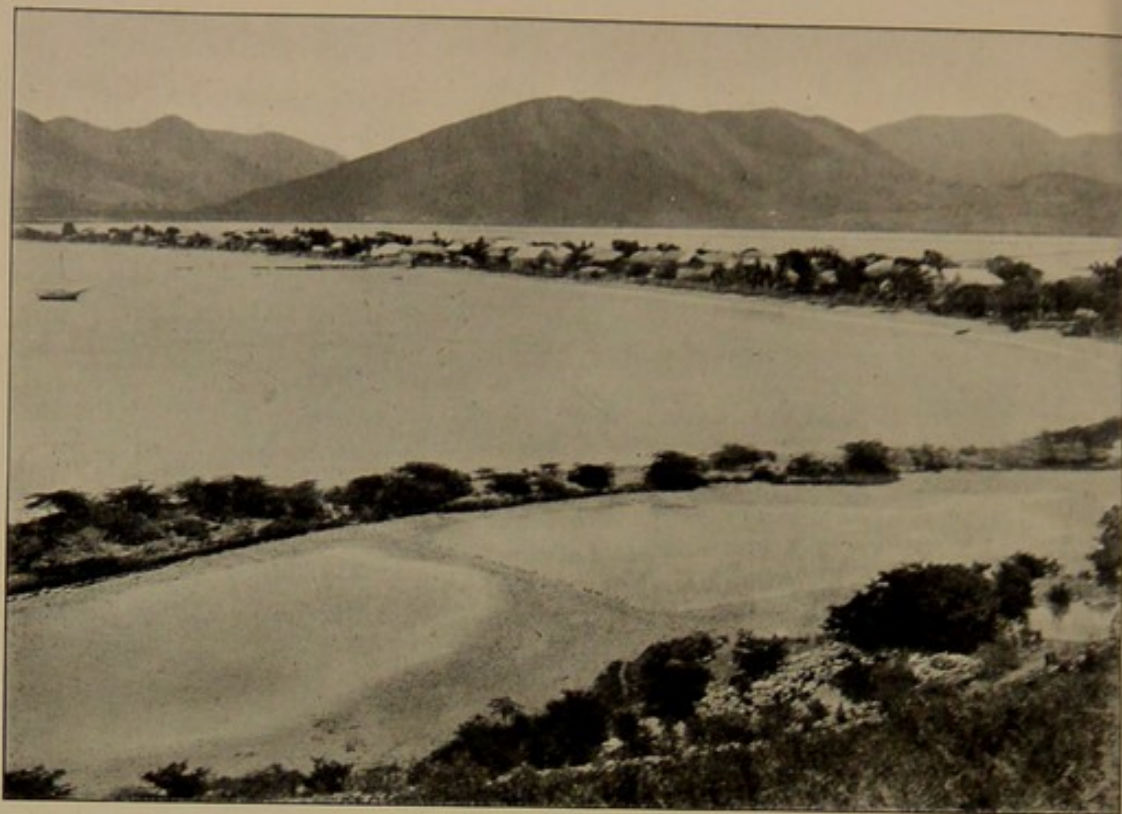
The women engaged in the salt work appeared cheery and well contented, as might be expected from people who can earn as much as two shillings in the day, which is an exceptional wage for a female labourer in the West Indies. Work in concentrated brine, however, has its dangers, and these poor women well deserved a high rate of



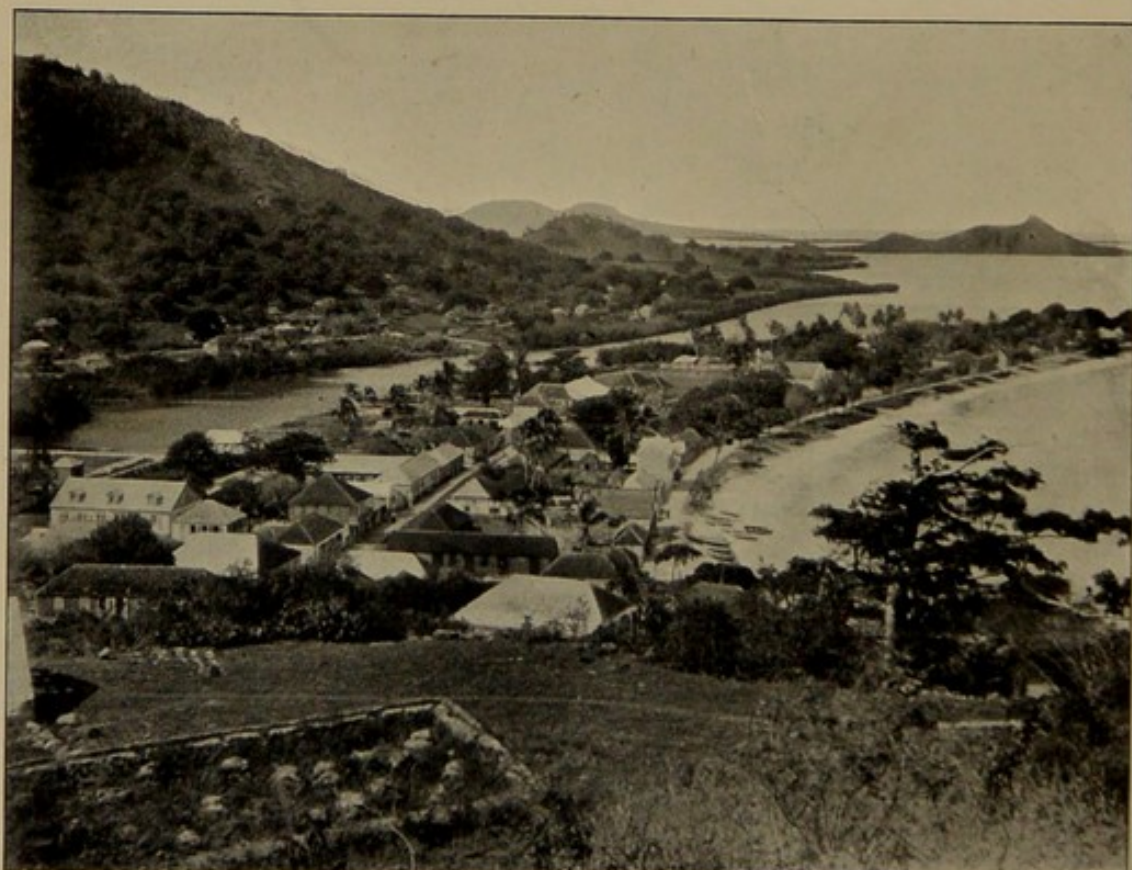


Women carrying Salt from the Rafts to the Salt-heap.





Philipsburg, lying on a narrow strip of land between the outer sea and the salt-pans.



Marigot, showing Simpson's Pond, separated from the outer sea by the long promontory.



payment, as I was told that the scooping up of the salt with the hands is liable to cause ulcers under the nails and that the workers had to wear a metal covering like a thimble to protect themselves. My informant also said that it would be very desirable to perfect a more substantial covering for the whole of the fingers, at a price which would bring this safeguard within the reach of all. Even the continual wading in this brine has such an irritating effect on the skin that several of the workers had sores on their legs and appeared to be vainly trying to protect themselves by wearing stockings or some other inefficient covering. Some even wash themselves in the sea when the day's work is done so as to dilute the concentrated solution on their skin.

The low-lying salt-pans cannot be seen from the sea-front, so in order to obtain a sufficient elevation to overlook the narrow little town it was necessary to ascend the barren hills which bound the harbour and the lagoon behind it. These hills are difficult of ascent everywhere, not from their steepness but on account of the prickly-pear growing on their stony surface. Any kind of prickly-pear is a serious impediment to travelling; this, however, was an unusually troublesome dwarf variety which went by the local name of "suckers." The ordinary plant merely tears your clothes and skin, perhaps leaving a few of its spicules in your flesh, while the sucker readily detaches the whole of its youngest leaf, which clings to the traveller, and, if not speedily removed, strews its minute prickles over whatever part of the body the attached leaf is brought into contact with. The little negro boy who accompanied me was so tormented by the attacks of these suckers on his naked feet that he began to cry, and as a preliminary to taking a photograph on these inhospitable hills, I had to smash with stones all the suckers within one or two yards of where the camera was planted. A few rough stone cottages were built at the commencement of the rising ground, where a wretched pony had so many suckers attached to the hair on his head that I remarked to a black woman that the animal would lose his eyesight if they were not removed. It was indeed a region of desolation.

About a week after my arrival I was obliged to rest indoors for one or two days, owing to one of my eyes having become inflamed. This may have been due to constant exposure to the sun for nearly two months of the West Indian summer, now at its hottest in the month of June, or perhaps the glare on the water of the salt-pans may have been the cause. When sufficiently recovered I started late in the afternoon for Marigot, the distance between the two capitals being only seven miles.

After following the left margin of the lagoon rather more than half a mile inland, the road turns to the left in its steep ascent of the stony hills, and descending on the other side comes out again near the sea-front, which it follows to Marigot. This coastline, however, is not that of the open sea, but of an inlet called Simpson's Pond, lying between the main part of the Island and a promontory which juts out at Marigot and runs for miles almost in the direction of Philipsburg. The Dutch territory extends rather more than halfway towards Marigot. Before reaching the French part of the Island, however, I stopped at one of the few straggling houses along the



roadside to ask a white man for some information about the journey. He was a Dutch policeman, although English-speaking, and said that he would accompany me as far as the frontier, about a mile further on, where he was going to meet his wife who was returning from Marigot. The coast country now improved in appearance, being either naturally superior to the desert region around the salt-pans, or else trouble had been taken to remove some of the stones on the surface and to exterminate the prickly-pear. It could hardly be said to look fertile, but certainly presented the appearance of pasture land, on which some cattle in fair condition were grazing. We were now joined by a negro who was going on to Marigot. I felt that this man might be very serviceable as there was no accommodation house in the little town, and, if left to my own resources, I should be dependent on such directions as a stranger might receive after nightfall, not a very promising conjunction. Presently the policeman met his wife, and before returning home with her told the negro to try to find me a lodging. Although we made good headway on the level coast road, night fell upon us when we reached the outskirts of Marigot, where I could see that Simpson's Pond to our left was now quite narrow at the commencement of the promontory here given off from the mainland. The negro now brought me to a likely place for a lodging, a good-sized store in one of the few streets. The white man, to whom he spoke civilly, informed me that he had no accommodation and advised my companion to take me to Coucou's house.

We now went a few hundred yards in the dark along the flat promontory which lies between the outer sea and Simpson's Pond, while I began to wonder who or what Coucou was, as the name sounded strange. At last we came to a small wooden house which lay in a row with several others in this outlying part, and on making inquiries at the door Coucou came out. I had been rather apprehensive that this might have been some undesirable personage, and was relieved to find that Coucou was—such as I found her. This was a tall old woman, straight as a dart in spite of her apparently seventy years, with good European features and blue eyes. She was in the main a white person and could not at most have been darker than a quadroon, but her skin was so withered that it was impossible to gauge accurately her original colour. With the tone and manner of a person accustomed to provide for strangers, she offered to do what she could for me, so my guide now left me after receiving a well-earned reward from one who felt grateful at having been rescued from the unenviable position of wandering at night in search of a lodging. Like the other inhabitants in this French part of the Island, Coucou was an English-speaking person, although she thought it due to her French nationality to call me Mushu (Monsieur) in the same manner that the Jamaican negress addressed the Chinaman politely as a foreigner. Some supper was prepared for me without delay. I had brought a bun, and my hostess provided some eggs and coffee, so I fared quite as well as I had any right to expect. Feeling more comfortable now, I began to take in the surroundings. The wooden house appeared to contain two rooms, of which I was now in the larger. The family only consisted of Coucou herself and her adopted son, a negro boy called Tatal, but there was another lodger besides myself,



a lively young French quadroon called Amalie, who had come with her little child from the Island of Guadeloupe, and was waiting for a ship to take her to her husband in Santo Domingo. Strains of dance music were now proceeding from a neighbouring house, where Amalie made frequent excursions, generally returning breathless and excited after the dance was over. I should have liked to have seen this function myself if it had not been for the still inflamed condition of my eye, which prevented me from going to what might have been an amusing entertainment. At bed-time Coucou and Amalie retired to the other compartment, leaving me with Tatal, who slept at the other end of the same room as myself.

In the morning, after a breakfast of eggs, bread, and coffee, Tatal accompanied me on a photographic expedition to The Fort, which every one said was the best place for commanding a view. This so-called fort was a ruined fortification, on a neighbouring hill, where I obtained a fairly good grouping of part of Marigot, Simpson's Pond, and the commencement of that long promontory, apparently described as Basses-Terres, where Coucou's house was situated. We subsequently ascended another hill and followed the main road beyond Marigot without seeing any better view. The general aspect of the country, although poor and stony, was much less desolate than in the neighbourhood of Philipsburg. Marigot, although an English-speaking place, showed more signs of French nationality than Philipsburg did of Dutch. Several of the business houses had distinctly French names over them, and the *gendarmerie nationale* was conspicuous. English money was current here as well as in the Dutch part of this cosmopolitan little Island, which belongs to two nations and speaks the language of a third; the coins, however, of their respective flags were also in use.

In both settlements the civility of the negroes was noticeable as compared with the anglicized islands; neither did the black subjects of these two nations beg. I had previously attributed the good manners of the French-speaking negroes in the British islands to the superior politeness of their language. This, however, cannot be the principal cause, as I now found myself under foreign flags with English-speaking negroes who were just as civilly spoken as the peasants of Grenada, St. Lucia, or Dominica—although from their more cosmopolitan life and closer contact with the town, they did not so often touch their hats. Why should English-speaking negroes under the British flag be less civil than either those who speak French under the British flag or those who speak English under foreign flags? The question is an interesting one, as the fact is much more obvious than the cause, and the matter will be treated at length in the last chapter.

We now returned to Coucou's house, where late breakfast was prepared for me before my departure for Philipsburg. The price charged for supper, bed, and early breakfast was two shillings, and for late breakfast sixpence more, which was very cheap for these parts, where a stranger will seldom be able to live at the daily rate of half-a-crown. Of course there was no style about it, but the rough accommodation was clean and honest of its kind. An amusing scene now occurred between Coucou and Tatal, who had proved himself to



be a very lazy companion, lagging behind to transact business of his own, which consisted chiefly in talking to other boys, instead of walking by my side or even in front as a guide should do. He was now lounging on the doorstep instead of doing what he was told. The principal cause of dispute, however, was that Tatal considered himself entitled to keep the money which I had given him for his somewhat slack services as a guide; while Coucou thought that, as she provided for the boy, he ought to hand over his earnings to her, and most people will say that she was right. Coucou became quite excited in the controversy, and finished by breaking out violently into French, thus, "Now, look at me, I am nearly white; look at my eyes" (which were blue). "And you, you are black—*sacré nègre, sacré nègre!*" she repeated, with such vehemence that Amalie, Tatal, and myself all began to laugh. My farewell to the old lady was cordial, and even affectionate, as she had proved a friend in need, and now said that when I came again to St. Martin I must stop at her house, promising to make me more comfortable on the next occasion. Much, however, as I should like to see her again, St. Martin is an out-of-the-way place, and the chances are against it.

I now started on the return journey to Philipsburg, where I arrived without further adventure. One of the few signs of Dutch nationality in Philipsburg was a building with *Openbare School* written on it. English used to be the only language taught in the Dutch schools in these parts, but the Government has lately woke up to the idea that this was not treating their own language respectfully, so Dutch is now taught half the time and English the other half. English, however, will always continue to be the medium of conversation, as, to use the words of my informant, the Dutch have begun to teach their own language "too late." The few officials, of course, were Dutch, the Governor living in a large unattractive-looking house at the foot of the stony hills outside the town.

While awaiting an opportunity for continuing my journey towards St. Thomas, news was suddenly brought that the Dutch mail-schooner had arrived on her way to Saba and other islands. At last my chance had come! I was, however, rather apprehensive about being shelved for an indefinite time on this rock in the ocean, until I found that there was every certainty of being able to continue my journey in the same schooner, which, after leaving the mail at Saba, went southwards to St. Eustatius and to St. Kitts and then returned to Saba in three days' time on its way to St. Martin and to St. Thomas. It was a double opportunity for seeing Saba and for completing my journey to St. Thomas at the same time.

The schooner was going to leave in the small hours of the morning, so I went on board in the earlier part of the night and informed the captain, a light-coloured man, that I was an intending passenger. He received me civilly in somewhat broken English, and I dozed until the ship was ready to start. By degrees I became aware that the language used on board was extraordinary. No reflection is hereby made on the expressions used by either captain or crew, but merely that some dialect was being spoken which did not exactly correspond to any of the better known Latin languages, although it was more akin to Spanish than to any other. Wishing to find out what it was,



I said to the captain, "What is this language which is being spoken on board? It sounds like Spanish, but it is not. It must be either Portuguese or Papiamento." And the captain stared in surprise at my remark, for it was, indeed, Papiamento. This peculiar dialect has already been mentioned as being used in the Dutch Island of Curaçao, off the coast of South America, where the negroes do not speak the official language, little used on the island itself, and less on the Spanish-speaking continent, and thus break out into an uncontrolled Spanish *patois*. The northern Dutch possessions of Saba, St. Eustatius and part of St. Martin are administered from the head-quarters of Curaçao, from where this ship had come, so the coloured and black crew were merely using their native dialect. It is not often that one travels in a ship in which the language of captain and crew can hardly be called European.

The distance from St. Martin to Saba is only twenty-five miles, but although this schooner of some eighty tons was much larger than the little sloop which had brought me to the former Island, the voyage lasted eight hours. The weather was most unfavourable, varying between a dead calm and a squall, so that the sails flapped idly, until a sudden gust came which hit them such a side crack that they seemed likely to be split, as, indeed, the captain told me had happened lately. A landsman has no business to criticize seamanship, yet I could not help thinking that it would have been better to have turned the ship's bow in another direction, or else to have furled, the sails which were again in danger of being split without any corresponding advantage to our progress. At last, however, the wind improved and we neared the Island of Saba.



## CHAPTER XXII.

## IN SABA.

I WAS rather apprehensive about the difficulties attendant on landing at Saba, which have been vividly described by the several times mentioned naturalist, Mr. Ober, in whose footsteps I had lately been treading on various occasions. This gentleman had the unfortunate experience of arriving by night at the worse of the two landing-places, known by the ominous name of "the Ladder," and he declares that nothing would have induced him to make the ascent if he had previously seen it by daylight. His account had led me to think that this ascent was made by an oblique cutting in the side of the cliff, from the sea-level to the top, and that if your head became dizzy you were liable to fall into the sea, or on the rocks below, so I had to console myself with the reflection that everyone who comes to Saba or who goes from it cannot be a sailor or an accomplished mountain-climber, and that if others survived the adventure so might I.

The Ladder, however, is only used in rough weather, and fortunately on this occasion the sea, although by no means calm, permitted us to reach the shore at the more usual landing-place known as the Fort, which is not absolutely precipitous like a great part of the coast, having a rugged beach of rocks and stones rather than of sand. Thus when the boat from the schooner came in on a wave the boatmen jumped out and hauled us a little further towards the land. My luggage was then carried a few yards further to a little wooden room which does duty as the customs-house at the foot of the mountain, where the civil Dutch officer, English-speaking like the rest of the inhabitants, did not delay me many minutes. From the very commencement it could be seen that civility but high prices were the leading features of a stranger's treatment here, as I was charged one dollar (four shillings and two pence) for my passage between the ship and the shore, although the distance was only a few hundred yards. Men were now waiting to carry my belongings up the steep path to the seemingly only accommodation-house in the Island. As, however, my visit was only going to be of three days' duration, I left the larger of my two small trunks in the customs-house until my departure, to the disappointment of those who were expecting a well-paid employment. We now commenced the ascent through a cleft in the mountain by a path so steep that steps were cut in places. There was, however, nothing terrible about it, although most people will breathe heavily before they reach the top. By this circuitous route it must be nearly a mile to the centre of the straggling capital, which is so unique in its surroundings as to merit a detailed description.



Its official name is Leverock Town, commonly called "Bottom." The reason for this nickname is that, while lying at the elevation of about eight hundred feet, it is considerably lower than another large settlement called Windward Side Village, whose inhabitants somewhat naturally allude to their descents to the capital as *going to the Bottom*. Bottom is a sparsely built settlement of wooden houses, situated in a large concavity said to be the crater of an extinct volcano and must extend more than half a mile in its different directions. It is practically surrounded by the mountain, which is perforated on one side by two chasms, one leading to the landing-place called the Fort and the other known as the Ladder. The ground here, as in other parts of the Island, is so stony and barren as to suggest that the world must be very crowded, otherwise people would not be induced to live on such a weather-beaten rock in the ocean where it was almost pitiful to notice the patches of maize or cassava planted in stony ground which hardly appeared worth cultivating. As might be expected, the natural vegetation was of a very stunted kind on this bleak mountain side, whose principal crop appeared to be the stones, often piled up to make walls at the sides of the tracks leading to the different houses or settlements. The impossibility of attempting any considerable amount of agriculture is probably the reason why ship-building has here become an important industry. Bottom, the capital, is not so large as Windward Side. These two places might contain two thousand inhabitants between them, while smaller settlements were said to account for nearly another thousand, thus making a total of almost three thousand for the whole Island, whose area was given by a Dutch official at from seven to nine square miles.

Unlike most of the West Indian Islands where the greater part of the population are black or coloured, the white inhabitants are here the most numerous. Many of these people, however, are very poor, and dress in a style hardly superior to that of the negroes, some even going barefoot. There is, indeed, so little work to be had in Saba that many go to America in search of it. The climate was agreeably fresh compared with St. Martin, where the low-lying country near the salt-pans is much sheltered by the almost surrounding hills, besides which the elevation of eight hundred feet at Bottom and of several hundred feet higher at Windward Side makes a marked difference in these latitudes, an advantage which is further enhanced by the wind-swept position of this mountainous little Island. Mosquitoes, indeed, would find it difficult to hold out against the perpetual sea-breeze, even if they could otherwise exist in a place where there is so little fresh water or vegetation.

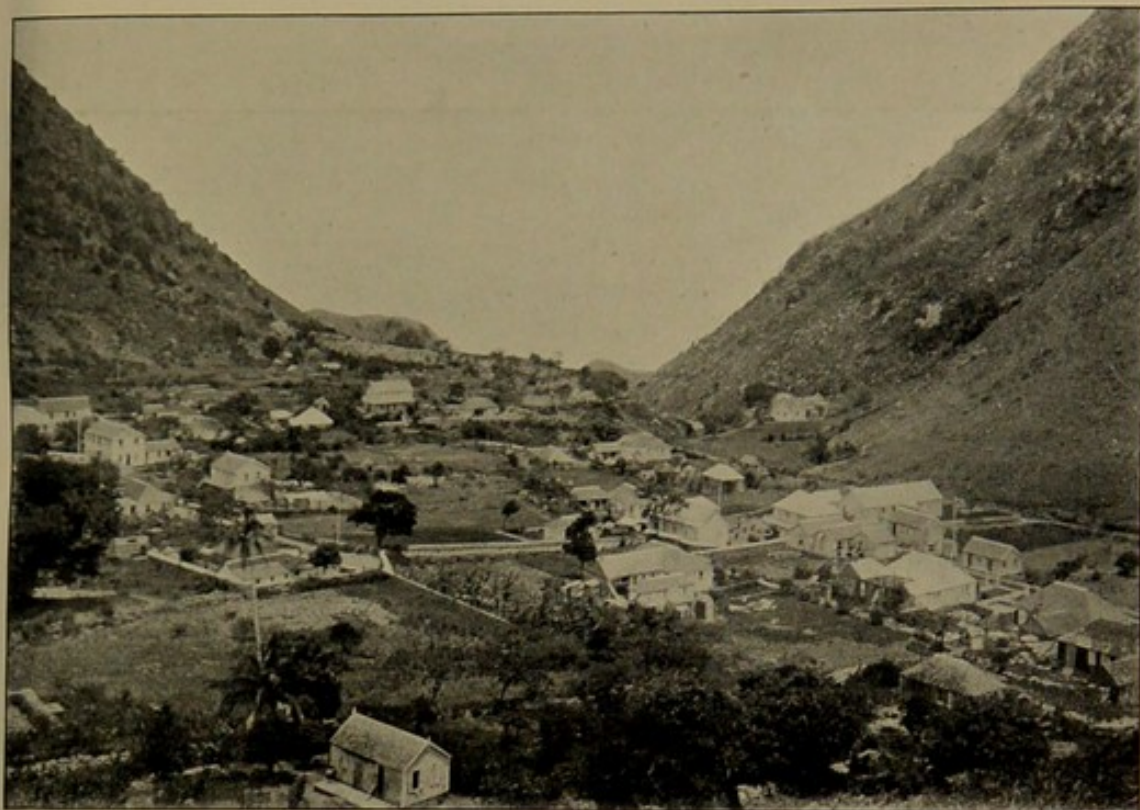
The hotel to which I had been brought was a one-storied building with that private-family appearance so common in these remote places not often visited by strangers. The difficulties about providing fresh food, already noticed in St. Martin, were intensified here and had their effect on the prices, the daily cost of board and lodging being eight shillings. Almost the only time that I heard Dutch spoken in these parts was by the two officials who boarded in this house and used their own language when talking together. As in St. Martin, however, English is now taught only half the time in the schools, but the Dutch taught in the other half does not appear to enter into the general life of the people.



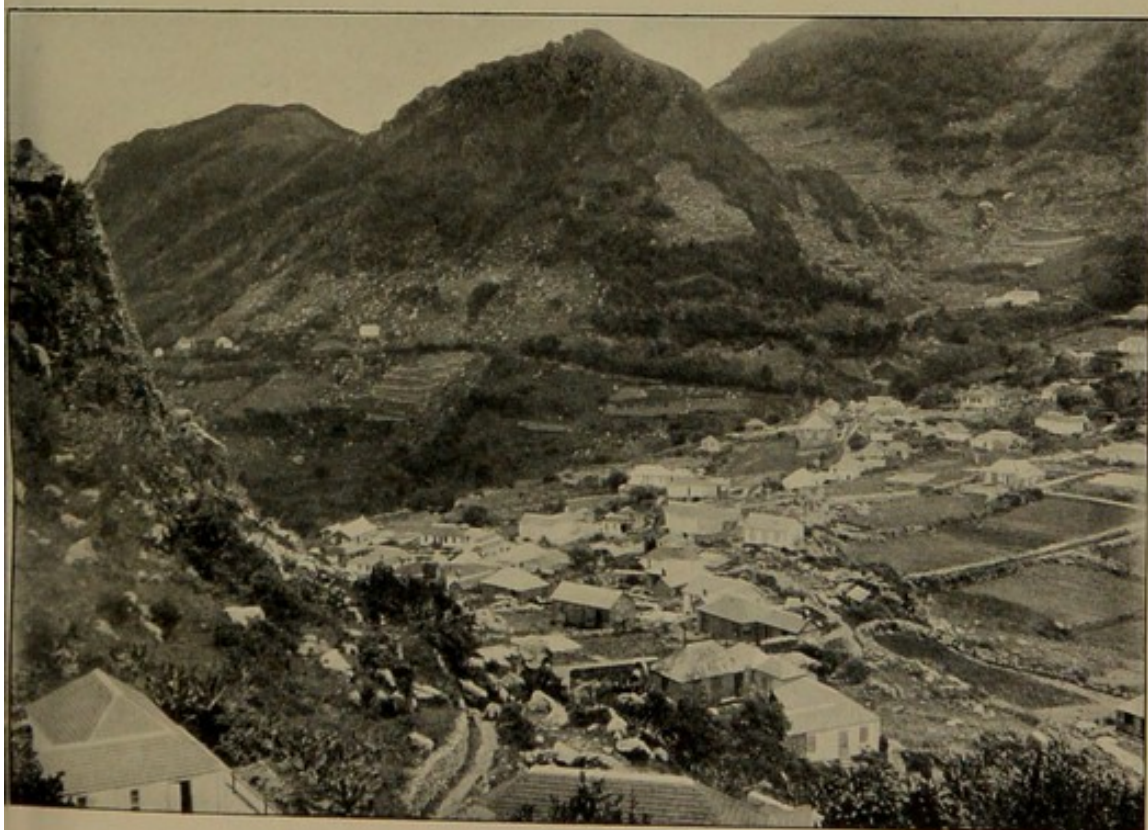
Notwithstanding the limited area of Saba, it is very necessary to have a competent guide, owing to the impracticable nature of the whole Island, where it is seldom possible to travel in a straight line, so I obtained an intelligent coloured boy as my companion and spent the day after my arrival in looking for suitable views on the sides of the large hollow in which Bottom is situated. On the following day we went to Windward Side, about three miles distant from the capital by the track, and of course far less in a direct line over the mountain. We first climbed out of the hollow in which Bottom is situated by ascending a stony track in which steps were cut in the steepest places, until we arrived at what seemed to be the summit or dividing range of this part of the Island, where the road turns to the left, still keeping to the high ground. The walk here was pleasant on account of the comparative coolness caused by the considerable elevation and by the sea-breeze. There was a slight descent before arriving at Windward Side, as presumedly it had not been thought desirable to build the settlement in the most exposed situation. The scenery around this village was even wilder than at Bottom. The stones and general bareness of this bleak region were at least equally apparent, while the greater height of the mountain here and the peaked outlines of some of its summits imparted a blend of grandeur to what had been previously mere desolation. I walked through the stony village and ascended the further side of the mountain in order to obtain a good view, but the clouds would not lift from the highest peak, so I had to content myself with some of the lower elevations which appear in the picture of the straggling settlement. Here, indeed, as in the capital, the houses are scattered over so great an area that they cannot be all included without taking the view from too great a distance. On my way back through the village I stopped to photograph the quaint-looking little Anglican church which stands in the most central part. The stones, here piled up on each side of the narrow lane, are typical of Saba, although the patch of cane mitigates the asperity of the scene. This view points in the opposite direction to the other photograph which was taken at a much greater distance. While here I met the local photographer, for, strange as it may appear, a West Indian coloured man had thought it worth his while to establish himself in the capital, where we had a friendly chat in the evening.

There is a sulphur mine at a place called Zion Hill, about a mile and a half from Windward Side. I had hoped to photograph this industry and was much disappointed at hearing that the mine was no longer being worked. During the previous year I met a Sicilian who had been brought out here to superintend the sulphur burning and was then on his way home owing to the work having been discontinued, although he said he would return if the company desired it. This man, a very intelligent fellow, said that in Sicily the sulphur was only burnt (presumedly for sublimation) for six months of the year, in order that its fumes should not injure the agriculture during the other six months. In this respect Saba would have an advantage over Sicily, as its yield of sulphur must be very poor if it were not worth more than the few patches of cultivation. Apparently the Sicilian had never previously been absent from home for such a length of time, which had caused his wife great anxiety. She seemed



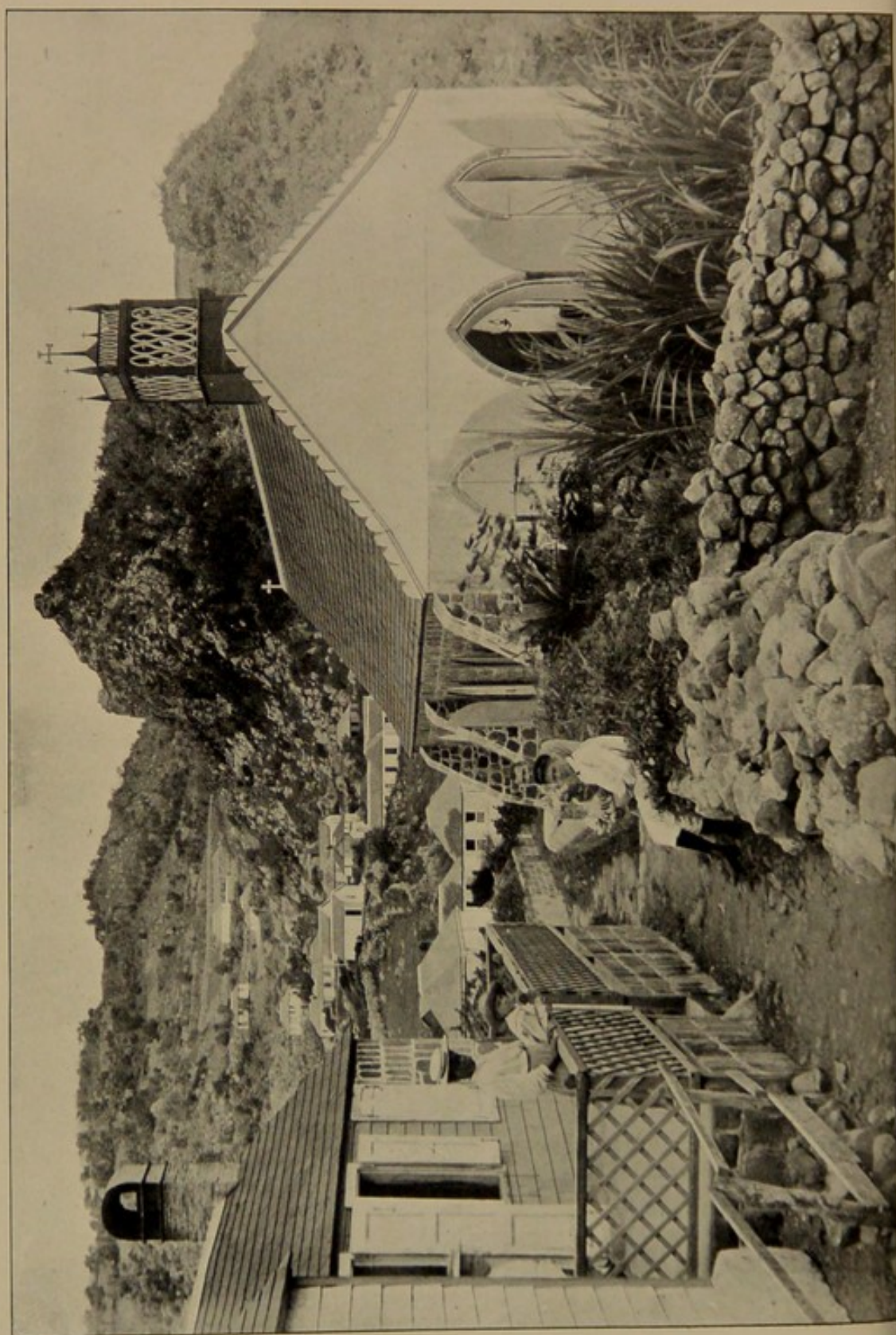


Bottom, looking towards the Fort Landing Place.



Windward Side.







to have pictured that he was enjoying a blissful existence in some halcyon region and that he lay bound by the enchantment of the surroundings, while in point of fact the poor man was probably on the bleakest inhabited Island in the West Indies. So urgent had her inquiries become that just before his return a friend had advised him to cable the following message :—

*"Guariti i piedi, rotto l'incanto, scappato dai negri."*<sup>1</sup>

It was hardly worth visiting the deserted mine, so we now hastened our departure to avoid getting wet by a threatening storm from which we should have had no shelter on the homeward journey. My companion told me that it always rained soon after the middle of the day; we managed, however, to return to Bottom just before a heavy shower came on towards three in the afternoon.

Before leaving Saba I wished to know whether the path from the landing-place, known as The Ladder, was really as formidable as my mental picture of it, so I made the greater part of this descent by the cleft which lies to the right of the passage towards The Fort. It is certainly much the steeper way of the two, being, when near the sea, a succession of steps which are not intermittent as in the other passage, but continuous. I did not go quite down to the sea in order to shorten the troublesome return, but as far as I went the path was nowhere on the edge of the cliff and would not make an ordinary person feel giddy. It might, however, appear a dangerous undertaking at night, especially as the very fact of landing at The Ladder for shelter would imply that the passenger was in a somewhat collapsed condition after a rough sea voyage.

During my short stay it was impossible not to be impressed by the civil manner of the people, whether white or black, being in fact a repetition of what I had met in the Dutch and French parts of St. Martin. And in this poorest of islands there was absolutely no begging! On the other hand, a stranger has to pay heavily. This may be explained by two reasons, the greater consumption of imported food owing to the poverty of the natural resources and the rarity of the arrival of a stranger, who is looked upon as a windfall.

Word now came that the mail-schooner was in sight, so I hurried down to the Fort with my few belongings. My three days' visit had been just long enough to give me a fair idea of the Island without losing time or money by a prolonged stay. I went on board at about three in the afternoon while the schooner was standing out at sea, after which we took about two hours in rounding the Island and did not arrive outside the harbour at St. Martin until eleven at night. Here I was much disappointed to find that the cautious captain had no intention of entering until the next morning, so, instead of resting comfortably in the hotel, I spent the night in the schooner, which was tacking to and fro in front of the land. Even when the captain entered the harbour in daylight he would not cross the bar, although other ships of the same size were said to do so, and thus my passage to the shore in a boat was made much longer. At length I reached land in time to have a few hours' rest at the hotel before leaving for St. Thomas, where we arrived on the following day.

<sup>1</sup> The feet being well, the enchantment broken, escaped from the negroes.



## CHAPTER XXIII.

## IN ST. THOMAS.

THE harbour of Charlotte Amalia, the capital of St. Thomas, is decidedly pretty and is said to be the crater of an extinct volcano. Its entrance is bounded on the left side by a little island while, to the right, at the narrowest part of the channel, lies Rupert Rock, which, according to the "West Indian Pilot," "is thirteen feet high, whitewashed, and cannot be mistaken." The principal part of the town is built on the low-lying strip of land along the shore, but, as the space here is very limited, some of the streets fringe the steep hills above and are connected with the parts below by long flights of steps. It is popularly said that the town lies on three hills, which are merely spurs of the long range rising above the coast.

My reasons for coming here had been threefold—to find a steamer to take me to Europe, to see the views, which had been described as beautiful, and to visit a Danish Island, for purposes of comparison. I was reminded of the first of these reasons before landing, when the boatman who was taking us on shore remarked, "There goes the mail on board the Danish steamer." This ("East Asiatic") line was the very one by which I had hoped to travel, chiefly, on account of the moderate price of its first-class fare, which approximates to that of the second-class in the English mail steamers from Barbados. Now, however, I had to trust to other opportunities, as the Danish Line has only a monthly service.

The landing-place gives a very pleasing impression. Instead of a noisy wharf, thronged with gesticulating and offensively familiar negroes, as is too often the case in the British islands, you land quietly at the edge of a public promenade a few feet above the tranquil waters of the harbour, and have so little trouble that the whole routine seems automatic and hardly leaves any recollection of details. The quiet civility of the negro porters is probably influenced by the presence of the military-looking Danish police, who say little but appear to look sharply at whatever goes on. I had been recommended to go to a small hotel where the prices were moderate compared with those generally charged at St. Thomas, which is one of the dearer of the West Indian Islands. In this house my daily board and lodging cost one dollar and a half (six shillings and threepence) with the advantage of having attached to my bedroom a small room, easily darkened, which was very useful for photography. The food, however, was very meagre, and better could have been obtained in Barbados at a much lower price.

In its own way this capital of St. Thomas is just as peculiar as the



Dutch settlements lately described. As a rule the town is an appendage of the country, while here it may truly be said that the country is an appendage of the town, almost all the inhabitants of the Island living in the latter. An English resident in a neighbouring island informed me that the population of Charlotte Amalia was about eight thousand and that there were less than ten thousand in the whole of St. Thomas. In a book written some years previously ("The West Indies," by Fiske) it is stated that, "Nearly all its fifteen thousand people, of whom nine-tenths are black or coloured, live in and about the port." Both statements tend in the same direction and may be equally correct, for in the West Indies the population of many places has decreased of late years and it will be seen that this town depends on abnormal conditions for its existence. There is practically no work in the lightly inhabited and somewhat barren country, so the working classes make their living out of the many steamers which call here, earning high wages from this truly "floating" population, and, when not thus employed, take their ease rather than work at a low rate. Thus the spending capabilities of the urban labouring class, whose requirements are much greater than those of peasants, have tended towards making everything dear, as is seen in the more dressy appearance of the coloured and black people, among whom the women generally wear straw hats instead of kerchiefs and seldom go barefoot.

The bustle in the main street leads a stranger to suppose that he has arrived in a much larger town, until he reaches the suburbs by ascending a few flights of steps on the hills. In many ways, however, this medium-sized Danish capital will compare favourably with the largest British towns in the West Indies, and the credit due to its Government is enhanced by the physical difficulties caused by want of sufficient level ground, in spite of which the town has a neat and well-cared for appearance. Without ornamental pretensions, most of the houses in the central parts are substantially built, and some are even handsome, while wooden shanties hardly exist except in the suburbs. The prices of the merchandise sold in the good stores are rather high, in accordance with the general tone of the place, few things being cheap except tobacco and spirits. English is almost universally spoken, although Danish nationality makes itself felt in many ways, as in the names of the streets, the presence of the white police, and even the fashions, which have a slightly foreign look about them, perhaps most apparent when the band plays in the well-laid-out promenade fronting the harbour. Both English and Danish money are used, the latter consisting of silver francs of twenty cents, and notes from five francs upwards.

My first expedition was to a place called Manecke's Villa in the suburbs. It will be remembered that the left side of the entrance to the harbour is formed by a little island which does not reach within several hundred yards of St. Thomas. The further side of this gap promised some scenic inducement, so I hired a negro guide, who soon proved himself to be very feeble on his feet, but in return was an accomplished story-teller, in both senses of the word. We coasted along the shore for about a mile to the outskirts of the town and entered the villa's grounds, to which the public have free access. These grounds face the opposite side of the little island which helps

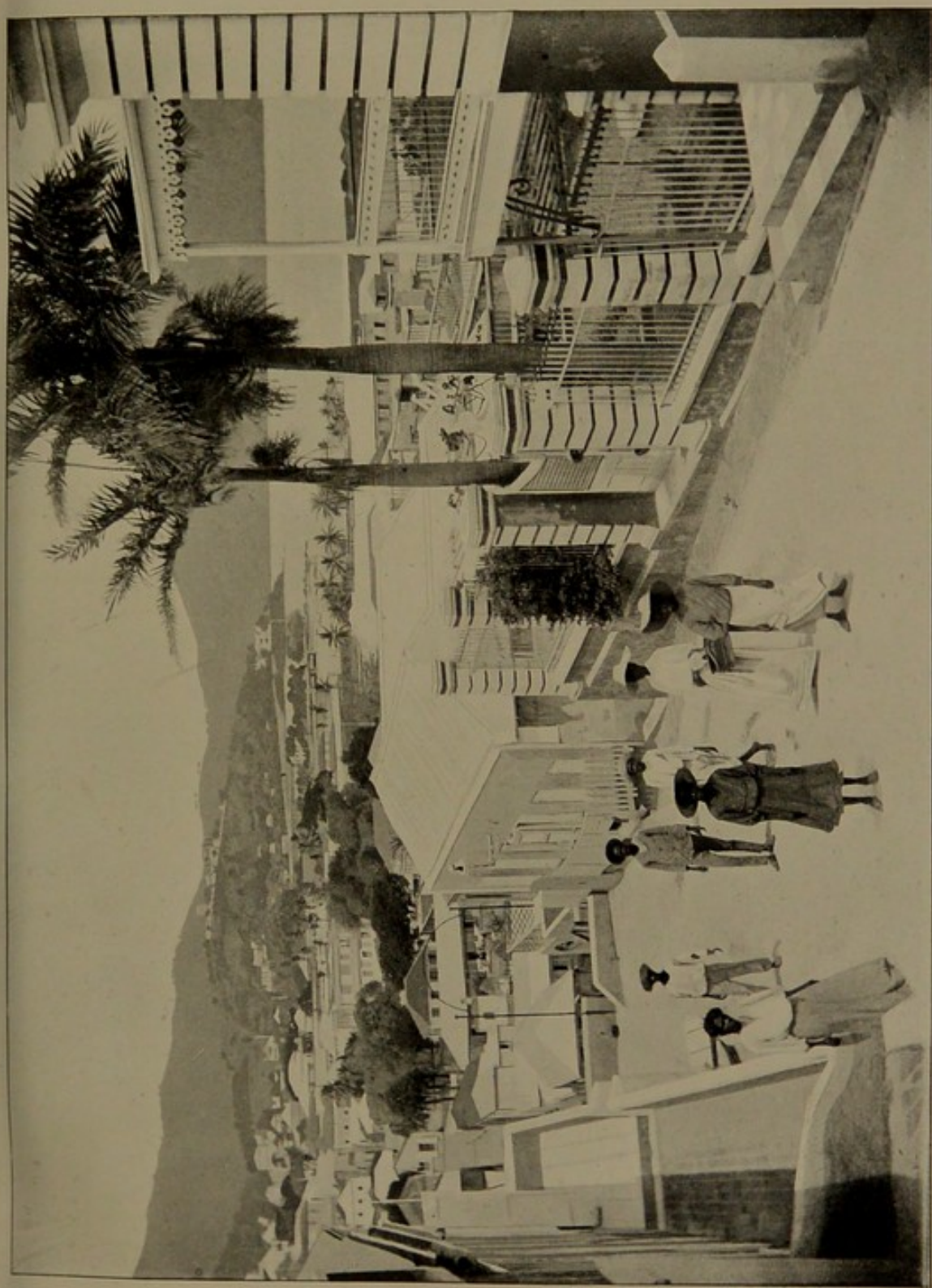


to form the harbour, the channel here being much more narrow. Unlike the main entrance, this channel has no free outlet, as a low rocky bar, hardly rising to the level of the water, stretches from the main Island to the smaller one and separates this land-locked part of the harbour from the outer sea, whose waves continually splash over the calmer surface inside. My guide now informed me that this bar had been built in one night to prevent the escape of buccaneers. It certainly seemed a most efficient plan for capturing these undesirable visitors, who when formerly pursued into the harbour through the main entrance could double round on the other side of the little island, and thus escape into the open sea through a channel too small for the passage of the larger war-ship, but were now deprived of any means of exit except the one occupied by their pursuer. This information was so interesting that, after taking the rather pretty view from a hill in the grounds of the villa, I named the photograph "Manecke's Villa and Buccaneers' Bar." It seemed strange, however, that the work, which would have been a marvel of speed in the greater centres of the world, could have been done so quickly in these parts. I was therefore somewhat provoked at my credulity by hearing afterwards that this "Buccaneers' Bar" was merely a coral reef, which had, indeed, impeded the egress, not of buccaneers but of sewage, and for this reason a small channel has lately been cut through it to allow the pent-up waters to communicate with the outer sea.

An old book, called "A Historical Account of St. Thomas" (by John P. Knox), states that there is no evidence that the buccaneers ever established themselves on this Island. Stories of this kind, however, are generally welcomed and thus become a valuable stock-in-trade for guides. Blackbeard's castle and Bluebeard's castle are pointed out to visitors, while some of the residents are unaware of the existence of such places, for on asking some children on Government Hill where Blackbeard's castle was, they appeared to know nothing about it, although they were well acquainted with the neighbouring house of the judge who owned the old building which has been given this name. This "Historical Account" gives many quaint details about the Island, two of which are worthy of being briefly mentioned. One of these is a copy of the petition to the Rigsdag of Denmark for compensation for the emancipation of slaves, in which the attitude of other European Governments on this matter is premised in these words: "Thus England, France, and Sweeden, have granted compensation. The first, £25 12s. 2d. sterling at an average per head." The other subject is an account of the old Reconciling Court which arranged amicably the greater part of the cases brought before it in the year 1849. This tribunal must, indeed, have been a blessing to the public, if not to the legal profession, as, "Lawyers are not permitted to plead before this court, and the only expenses attending its proceedings vary from 32 cents to \$1.25. The judges serve without compensation." The historian naturally wonders why this Court has not been adopted by other nations. I was told that the tribunal still exists under another name.

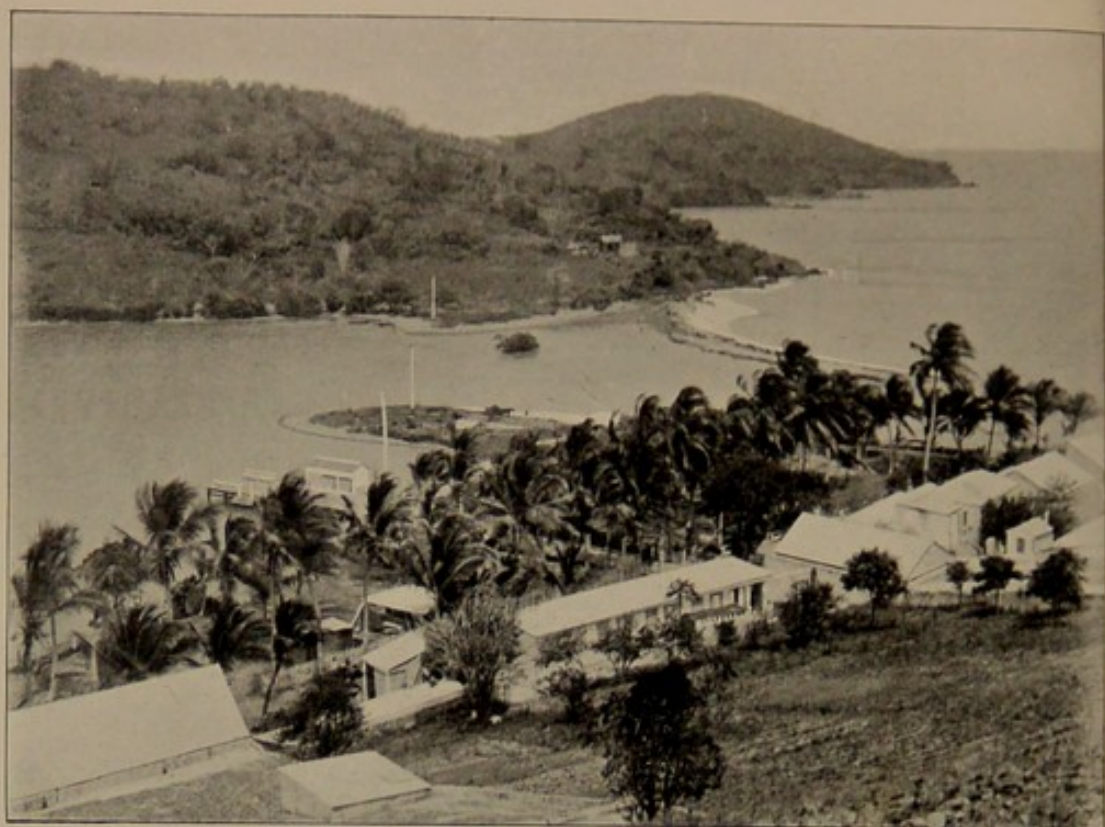
One of my inducements in visiting this Island had been the glowing description of its scenery. While acknowledging, however, that the writer had some grounds for his favourable comments, it is





Part of the Capital and Harbour, from Frenchman's Hill.





Manecke's Villa and "Buccaneers' Bar."



On Dorotea Estate, northern side of the Island.



evident that he was not a photographer, as the highly praised views from the heights above the town, although charming to the eye, are not good subjects for the camera. Perhaps the best place for a combined view of town and harbour is on Frenchman's Hill, where a considerable part of both can be included at a comparatively close distance. In the ascent of the steeper and more distant hills, I had to discard my feeble-footed guide of Buccaneers' Bar fame and to engage a lad at ten cents by the hour, an arrangement which brought him two shillings for a five-hours' excursion; but the people are so independent from the facility with which high wages can be earned, that he did not present himself on the following day and I had to engage someone else. On these occasions we followed the road to the well-known places called Mafolie and Solbergs, which lie at a considerable elevation on the range behind the town, the ascent not being so tiring as might be expected, owing to the breeze and that freshness which, even in the West Indies, is felt at a certain distance above the sea level.

The views, however, were too distant and were further marred by the absolute barrenness of this hilly and scrubby region, which, as in other countries where the ground is too arid for ordinary vegetation, produced a plentiful crop of thorny acacia (the mezquite of Mexico and the cockspur of Jamaica), whose name is here transformed into "cosha" by the common people. This unpicturesque plant, growing perhaps ten or twelve feet in height, often impedes the view and in any case makes an undesirable foreground. At one place, finding it impossible to get clear of these bushes, I asked leave to enter the grounds of a villa which commanded an open view. In the absence of the family, a good-looking coloured servant gave us permission and showed us the best place, which even here was too scrubby. As, however, the young woman had been very civil, I remarked in thanking her that it was a pity she could not accompany us further. "Oh yes, cookie," said my negro guide gallantly, "you must come with us." "I'm quite ready to go," was the somewhat unexpected answer. This, however, was hardly feasible, so leaving a little present in gratitude for her kindness, we went on our way.

This Island is about twelve miles in length from east to west, while its breadth, comparatively narrow in proportion, only measures some two or three miles across from north to south, although the distance appears greater owing to the steep and circuitous ascent into the interior. Up to now I had never been out of sight of the southern coast, on which the capital is situated, so I now crossed over to the other side. Near the summit of the dividing range there is a school at a place called Bonne Résolution. The aspect of the country now improves considerably, the scrub giving way to pasture land, which, however, does not present a very fertile-looking appearance owing to the continual outcrop of stones and rocks. There are now no sugarcane plantations in St. Thomas and the few stock-raising estates afford so little employment that the country is very lightly populated, with only an occasional peasant's cottage. A short distance beyond Bonne Résolution we arrived at Dorotea, near the northern coast, where the house on this estate is

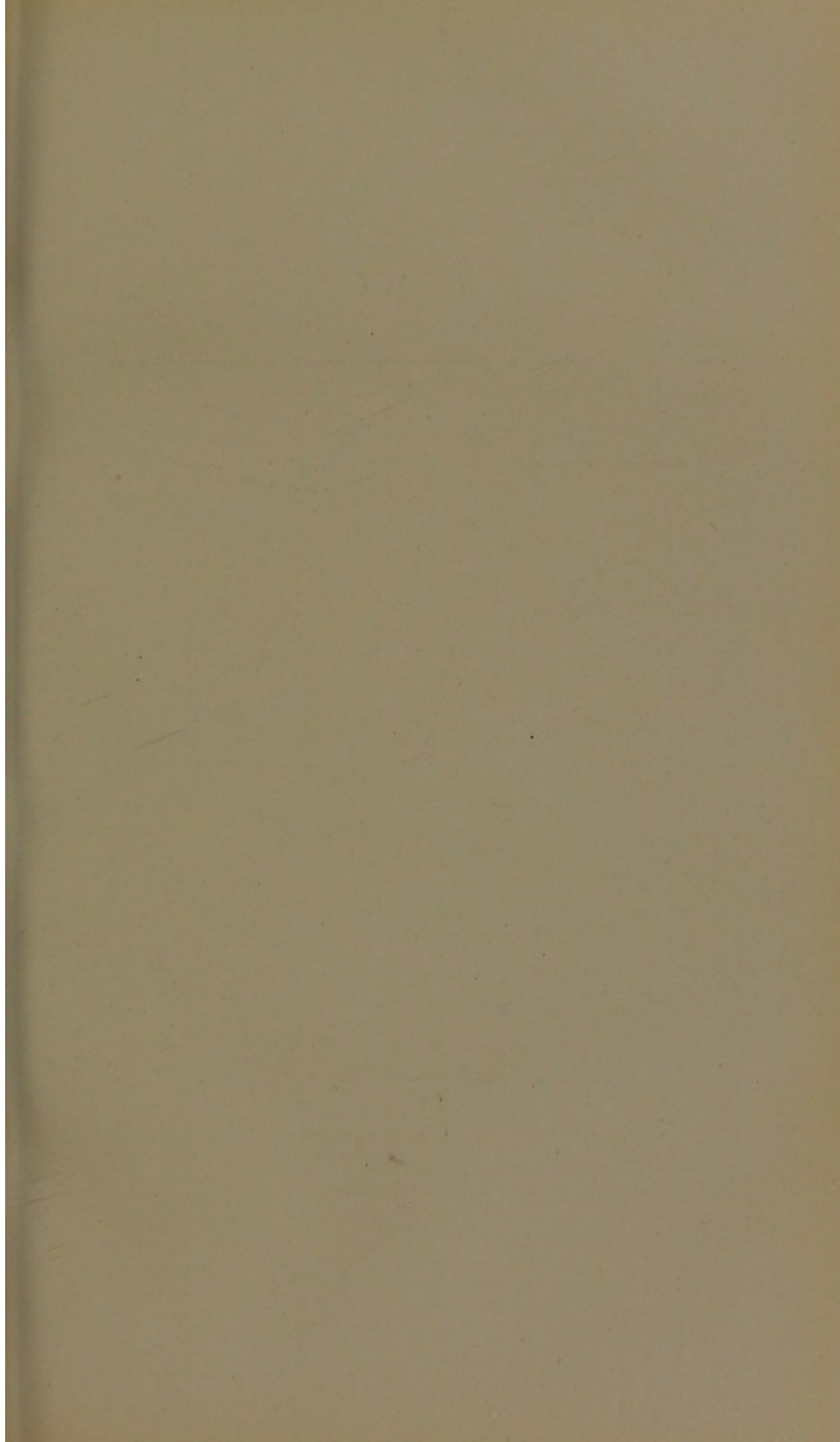


built in a solid but severely plain style on the somewhat bare-looking pasture land, which still showed that outcrop of rock which seems to be characteristic of the Island. The view taken at this place will give a fair idea of the peasants and scenery, the former differing but little from the anglicized negroes, except in their more courteous manner.

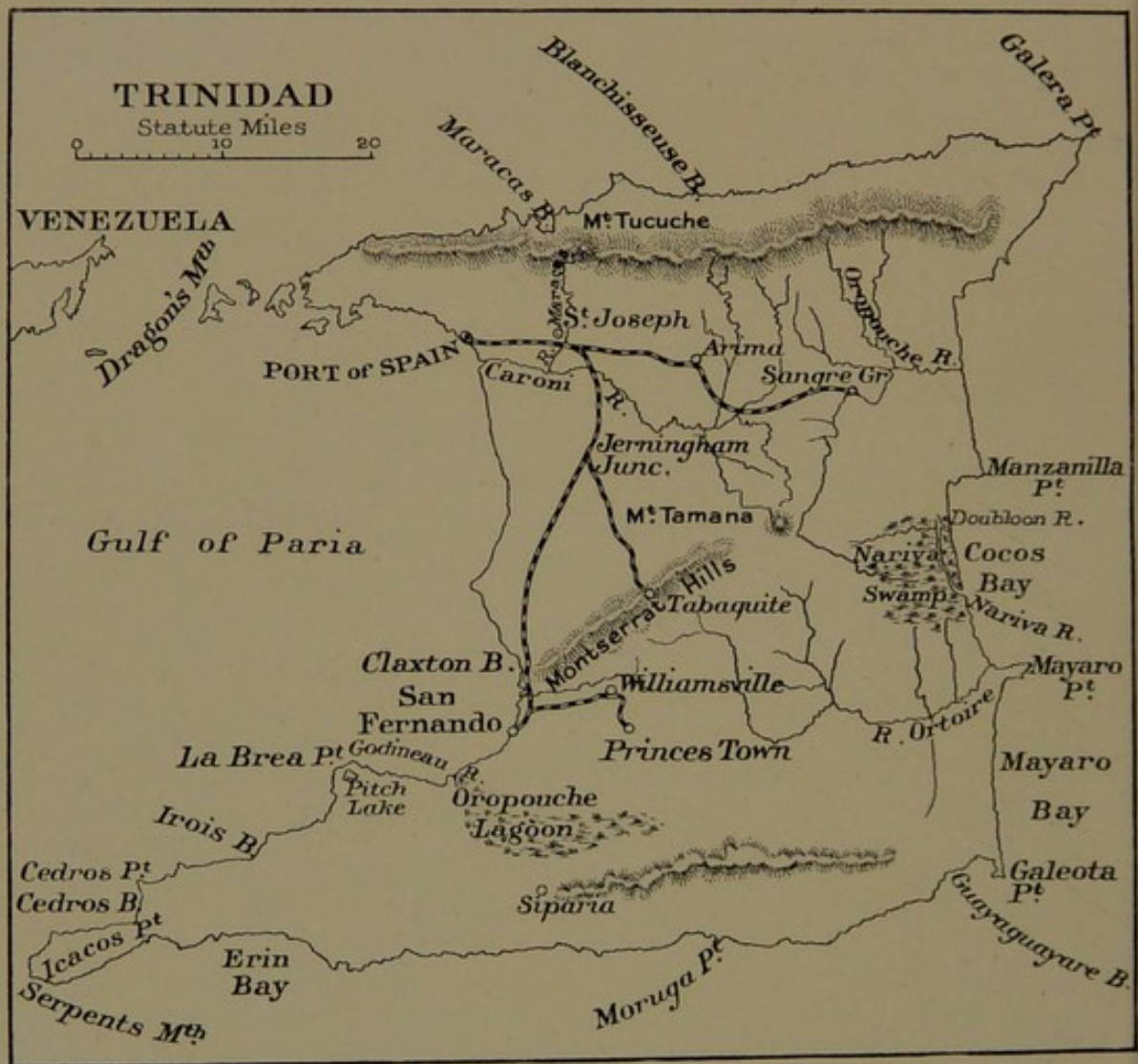
After a stay of nine days in St. Thomas an opportunity for returning to Europe offered itself in a steamer of the Hamburg-America Line, on board of which there was an English official from one of the neighbouring islands. Thinking that this gentleman might be able to suggest some reason for the better manners of the negroes in these foreign possessions, I asked him, "Why are the negroes in St. Thomas more civil than those in the British Islands?" He did not deny the assertion and answered in an inquiring tone of voice, "Paternal government?"

This, however, is trespassing on the last chapter.











## CHAPTER XXIV.

## IN TRINIDAD.

TRINIDAD—"the only prosperous island in the British West Indies!" These were the words used by a dignitary of the Church who was my fellow-passenger on the steamer which brought us to the Island. It was so interesting to obtain a candid opinion from a responsible person at the very commencement of my visit that I was induced to ask whether the prosperity was due to what are generally called natural causes or to exceptional action on the part of the inhabitants. On this point my learned authority was not quite so positive; he was, however, inclined to think that natural advantages had been the chief factor. The topic is so important, for the whole of the British West Indies as well as for Trinidad, that it will be discussed subsequently.

The northern entrance to the Gulf of Paria, by which name is termed the lake-like extent of sea between Trinidad and the continent of South America, is only twelve miles across, and is fancifully called the Dragon's Mouth, from the supposed resemblance of a chain of islands to the teeth of a dragon. These little islands stretch nearly half-way towards the mainland, forming a pretty picture as we passed through them in the early morning. On some of them small wooden houses are built for the express purpose of renting to people who want a restful holiday, so that families sometimes migrate to these isolated dwellings, where they can enjoy seaside amusements in a primitive manner.

On arriving near Port-of-Spain, the capital, the shallowness of the water obliges the steamer to anchor at some distance out at sea, and passengers have thus to be taken on shore in a launch. The impression given on landing is decidedly favourable, owing to the courteous speed with which the customs-house officials perform their duty, so that in a few minutes I was on my way in a buggy to a creole boarding-house in Richmond Street which had been recommended to me as an inexpensive place. The family, unlike many so-called creoles, were French-speaking white people, although one of them, with whom I made the necessary arrangements, spoke Spanish fluently. Like most of their nation, however, they preferred to use their own language and soon lapsed into French when they found I was merely tongue-tied from want of practice. Trinidad is rather inclined to be an expensive island, so I was well satisfied to find that the terms of the house were four shillings daily for board and lodging; but to judge from my experiences in both Trinidad



and Martinique there is a marked inferiority in the cleanliness of creole customs as compared with those of British West Indians.

On the following day, provided with a negro lad for my guide, I went out with the camera for the purpose of taking a bird's-eye view of the town. This proved a more difficult undertaking for a stranger than I expected, as a brief explanation of the position of the capital will show. Port-of-Spain is situated a short distance to the south of that long mountain chain which runs from east to west along the northern side of the Island. The ascent from the sea-front to the first spurs of this range is very gradual, and it is on this comparatively flat ground that the town is built. The well-laid-out streets run back rather more than a mile from the sea towards the savanna, by which name is known the large park separating the inland extremity of the town from the first spurs of the mountains. The savanna itself is nearly a mile across, so that by the time the first hills are reached, under which the botanical gardens and the Governor's house are situated, the distance from the principal business area of the town must be nearly two miles, and even then the elevation is not sufficient without ascending the range, in which case the trees will obstruct the view in most places. To the right of the town, however, another spur of the range, known as Laventille Hill, runs down near the sea. On this hill I had heard that a fine view could be obtained from the tower of a church, but unfortunately my guide, a town negro, did not know the way, so we wandered two or three miles along a wooded path, occasionally obtaining glimpses of the town without arriving at any suitable place. We had in fact gone about a mile too far, and when we retraced our steps to the church, which lay only a short distance from the track, the fine bird's-eye view from the tower was not suitable for my purpose. About a mile of wooded country lay between us and the town, so that the buildings appeared too small and were partially concealed by trees. Eventually, after losing one or two more days, I found a good site in front of the Masonic Lodge on Rose Hill, which is a small spur of Laventille Hill close to the town.

Port-of-Spain affords the somewhat rare object-lesson of a British West Indian town under favourable conditions. The fine buildings which it contains, although probably the best in the British islands, are not sufficient to call for extravagant praise, as the best English attempts at the building of cities in these parts are insignificant when compared with what the Spaniards have done in Havana; but in this capital of Trinidad, containing perhaps seventy thousand inhabitants, there is an atmosphere of business such as is caused by a thriving population, entirely at variance with that general appearance of decay so aptly described by the American writer, Mr. Hill, with reference to most of the British possessions in these parts. The cause of this is complex and must be treated at length with the discussion on the prosperity of Trinidad. An apparent result, however, is that the inhabitants, to judge from those who are seen in the streets, do not consist of such a large proportion of very poor negroes with only a sprinkling of well-to-do white or coloured people among them, but contain a considerable number of those who, without being rich,



are not in absolute want, and are thus able to contribute their little share towards the mercantile environment. The numerous East Indians contribute largely to the animation of the scene—the poorer ones by their picturesque Oriental appearance, while those whose industry has raised them above the condition of hand-to-mouth workers have aided the land of their adoption by the formation of that middle class which does not exist in sufficient proportions in most of the British islands. This phase of East Indian life is seen to a much greater extent in the smaller towns, as in San Fernando and Princes Town, although even here it is in evidence, as in the case of a fair-skinned East Indian woman, dressed almost in European style except for the flowing Oriental headdress, on seeing whom my negro guide remarked, "She almost looks like a white lady." In many of the other Islands, indeed, a small number of East Indians are occasionally seen, rarely, however, except among the ranks of the labouring class.

It would be too long to give a detailed description of the streets—of the fine avenue called Marine Square, into which most of the principal thoroughfares open at their end nearest the sea, of the good shops in Frederick Street and in other central places, or of the churches, public buildings and markets. Such subjects have their proper place in tourists' guide-books, but the pulse of the West Indies beats more strongly in the agricultural districts than in the towns, as must be the case in any country where the growing of raw produce is a more important industry than its elaboration, and if a stranger wishes to become acquainted with any of these Islands the sooner he tears himself away from the artificial hotel life of the larger capitals the more he will learn.

The Maraval Reservoir, about five miles from town, is considered to be one of the sights of the place, so, accompanied by an English-speaking negro guide, I started in one of the excellent electric tramcars, which soon carried us out of the streets and skirted the savanna in a semicircle to its further side. From here we had an enjoyable but dusty walk for the latter half of the distance, along the level country road, fringed in many places with those long bamboo, which seem to grow more luxuriantly in Trinidad than in the neighbouring West Indian Islands, and at the foot of picturesque hills thickly clad with verdure. The reservoir, which lies close to the road, is a large cistern of running water in the midst of foliage, with seats beside it, where we rested to enjoy the scene. It was here that I first saw that peculiar West Indian animal called the agouti. The man in charge of the reservoir had a young one which he wished to sell at the somewhat high price of ten shillings—too dear a purchase for my guide, who looked at the animal wistfully. It would, indeed, have been better for the owner if he had not held out for so high a price, for on a subsequent visit to photograph the reservoir the man told us that the agouti had escaped a few days previously. In appearance it is rather like a guinea-pig, while in size it more nearly resembles a rabbit.

On this second occasion I had an adventure, not altogether a pleasant one, just opposite the reservoir. It was on a Saturday afternoon when the country-people were returning from market to their homes. In front of us, riding on her donkey, was a very good



type of young country-woman, with a large empty basket, the contents of which had probably been sold in the market. She was light in colour, apparently a quadroon, and my guide was of opinion that she was a "Spanish creole." We had been keeping about the same pace along the road, so I had plenty of opportunities for observing her and finally asked if she would allow me to photograph her, offering a shilling for her trouble. She was a nice, quiet-mannered young woman and seemed inclined to consent, but just then two French-speaking young women came up, one of whom interested herself in the bargain, insisting that I should pay two shillings instead of one. We were all walking while the controversy was going on, so that when we reached the reservoir I consented to give the two shillings rather than lose my chance. When the photograph had been taken of my study on her donkey, with the interfering young woman holding the bridle, the latter person, not content with the money which had been duly paid, demanded to see the likeness at once. This, of course, was impossible, but she refused to accept my excuses, and cursed me in an almost unintelligible *patois*, in which she ineffectually tried to insert one or two opprobrious English terms, to the great amusement of my negro guide, who explained afterwards that she had not been able to say what she intended.

The principal market of Port-of-Spain is held in Charlotte Street, where, thanks to the courtesy of the people who lived opposite, I was able to obtain a sufficient elevation to photograph the animated scene on Saturday. On the same night I went out expecting to see the town in a very lively state, and was rather disappointed to find that the poorer classes do not promenade in any street here as they do in Barbados. My guide brought me to a room belonging to a society called "Souls in Purgatory," where dances are sometimes held. The relation of the amusement to the name of the society does not seem very appropriate, unless indeed it is meant that such dire consequences are the results of the pastime; on this occasion, however, there could have been no after-consequences as no function was going on. The only signs of festivity of this kind were in some houses occupied by East Indians, where drums were making an incessant noise.

Even a superficial description of Port-of-Spain would be incomplete without a mention of the western suburb of St. James, commonly called Coolie Town, where most of the East Indians of Port-of-Spain live. The tramcars, after a run of about two miles from the central parts, pass through the midst of the long straggling settlement, where these Orientals outnumber by far the black and coloured population, and where the streets are named in harmony with the nationality of their inhabitants, as Delhi Street or Agra Street. Most of these people are poor, but not squalid, and among them are jewellers and artisans, who make many of those curios which are so eagerly bought by strangers. On one of my visits to this village I was rather surprised to see a long train of buggies proceeding at a slow pace one after the other, while their occupants, a large party of tourists who had just arrived, were inspecting the articles which the Indians showed them. So great, indeed, is the sale of things of this kind, that it is said that many of those so-called products of "native industries" are not made in Trinidad, but are imported from the East. In one of these tram expeditions





Port-of-Spain, taken from the front of the Masonic Lodge, Laventille Hill.

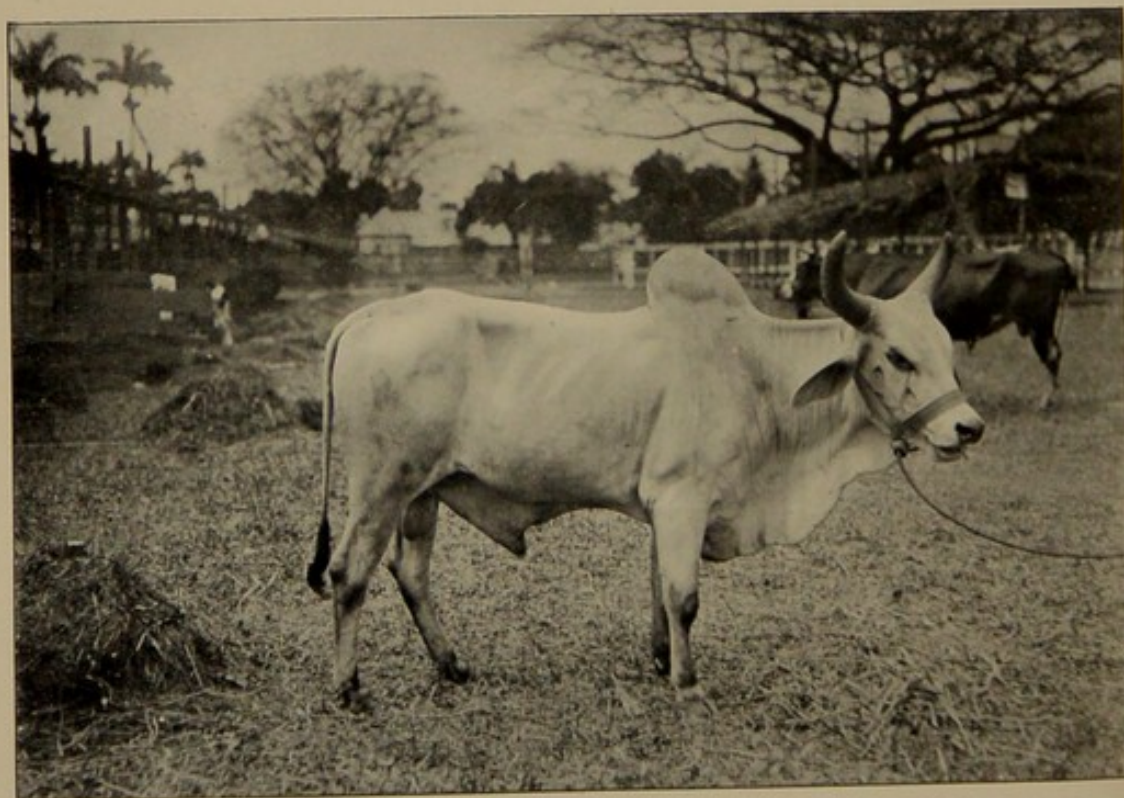


Charlotte Street Market.





Anglican Church at the side of Brunswick Square



Zebu (East Indian) Bull at the Agricultural and Industrial Exhibition.



to the suburbs, while still in the central part of the town, I saw a remarkable-looking individual wearing a tall hat and long boots, a most unusual combination. He was dark in colour, although not quite black, and had a prosperous appearance, to judge from his smiling countenance as he stood at the edge of the pavement, where he was apparently talking to some of his friends. So unusual an apparition excited my curiosity, for what ordinary human being would wear a tall hat and long boots at the same time, especially in the tropics? The costume seemed to correspond to that of the master of a circus-ring rather than to that of any other calling, as a phrenologist would not be likely to wear long boots, nor would a lion tamer wear a tall hat. My negro guide gave me this short explanation: "He used to be a good blacksmith; he is now a prophet. He can fool the people in the country, but the town people laugh at him." The style and dress of the man, however, proved that his present occupation was profitable, even if a pun appears to be made by the statement.

I now went to see the Agricultural and Industrial Exhibition, not so much from the usual motives which induce people to see shows of this kind, as because the fauna of Trinidad were said to be represented there by such a varied assortment of creatures as deer, lappe, quenck, agouti, porcupine, morocoy, and some of the larger snakes, as the huillia or anaconda. This looked like an unusual opportunity for seeing these wild animals which retreat so surely before colonization that they are rarely seen even by the people of the country itself. The morning appeared to be the best time to make the visit, especially as I wished to photograph the wild animals and knew that exhibitions generally become more crowded in the latter part of the day. On presenting myself, therefore, at the entrance it was somewhat of a disappointment to be told that the exhibition did not open until the afternoon. I expressed my regret and was preparing to leave when the man asked me to wait while he consulted some superior official, with the result that the latter, soon making his appearance, admitted me without payment and even provided me with some one to show me the animals. Exceptional treatment of this kind is rather typical of Trinidad. West Indian officials are almost invariably courteous in their manner, but in most of the other Islands I should probably have been met by a polite refusal, in accordance with the established rules. In Trinidad, however, there is a greater tendency towards the principle of "exceptions to be excepted," and it is probable that the consideration with which they treated me was prompted by the correct mercantile procedure of giving every facility to a stranger who had evidently come with the object of advertising the products of their Island.

Unfortunately most of the wild animals were housed in small, dark cages where it was impossible to photograph them. I was specially anxious to see the huillia, partly because the presence of so large a reptile in Trinidad emphasizes the close connection between this Island and the adjoining continent, and partly from having read the thrilling story with reference to the snake of this name in Kingsley's "At Last," which will be mentioned on arriving at the scene of the adventure. Finding it impossible to photograph the wild animals, I turned my attention to the zebu (East Indian) cattle as the most



interesting of the domestic ones, and took the photographs of a cow and a bull. Indeed it may be said that the cow nearly took me, for having a calf at foot she mistrusted my intentions with the camera, and charged so rapidly that I had barely time to get out of the way; the bull, however, was quite docile. The large tree on the right of the picture is the ceiba, or silk-cotton tree, which is common to the West Indies and tropical America. On returning to the exhibition building, I was shown many of the products of Trinidad and of its dependency, the Island of Tobago, such as mineral oil, cocoa, coconuts, maize and various fruits. There was also a stall of plants and shrubs from the nursery garden at St. Joseph, "the only nursery garden in the West Indies," as the owner said with a natural pride. The industrial part of the exhibition was also an interesting proof that Trinidad can turn out good work in metal from the local foundry.

As several languages and nationalities have already been mentioned in connection with Port-of-Spain and its suburbs, it may not be out of place to define their relative importance to each other in the Island generally. It would be rather hard to give a concise answer to the question, "What is the language of Trinidad?" The place of honour should, perhaps, be given to English, as being the language of the Government and of the larger mercantile enterprises, but French *patois* is spoken by a large number of the inhabitants of the capital, while in the country it is the usual language of the coloured and black people. Spanish still survives among some of the inhabitants of the capital, including of course visitors from the neighbouring Republic of Venezuela, and is also spoken in limited areas of the more remote country districts. Between one-quarter and one-third of the population of the Island are East Indians, the greater part of whom speak Hindustani among themselves. Many of the older ones have been years in Trinidad without acquiring any other language, owing to the manner in which they live and work together; now, however, that their children are taught English in the schools, the younger people are no longer proficient in the language of their parents. There are also a considerable number of Chinese, while of the negroes who come from the adjacent islands in search of work, Barbadians form the largest contingent.

Trinidad presents the somewhat rare example of a country which has never formed part of the dominions of the nation whose language, until lately, was spoken by most of its inhabitants. Shortly before the English took it from the Spaniards the latter had encouraged colonization from the neighbouring islands, with the stipulation, however, that every colonist should be a Roman Catholic. This, of course, debarred most of the English settlers, and the Island became so overrun by French-speaking people that they ousted the language of its Spanish owners. Thus we have the same sequence here as in some of the other islands, of the native Indians disappearing before the Spaniards, the Spaniards before the French, and the French before the English, whose language is destined to become dominant in the West Indies, but whether in the persons of English or Americans is still in the hands of Fate. The native Indians, of several distinct tribes, among which were Arawaks and Caribs, had not, however, become extinct when the English took possession of Trinidad, for



according to accounts a remnant of more than a thousand still survived, yet out of so appreciable a number practically none are now left. Whenever I made inquiries about them the answer was either that there were none, or that they were in some other part of the Island. There was, indeed, one on the first plantation which I visited, but not knowing at the time that these people had become such rarities in their former abode, I failed to take sufficient notice of him.

After spending about a week between the town and its suburbs, I determined to commence my acquaintance with the country by exploring the banks of the principal river in Trinidad, the Caroni, which discharges itself into the Gulf of Paria only two miles to the south of the capital. Near its entrance into the sea it opens out into a broad expanse surrounded by mangrove scrub, which anyone acquainted with the tropics knows must be practically impassable on foot, as the mangrove always takes its root in shallow salt water. I tried, therefore, to arrange with a boatman for a passage a few miles up the river. The man, taking me probably for a rich tourist, asked the exorbitant price of ten dollars (more than two pounds), asserting it would require four men, although I was told afterwards that two would have been sufficient. There were certainly two miles to be traversed by sea before entering the mouth of the river, but the waters of the Gulf of Paria are generally calm and the journey would have been well paid at half the price. Finding that another boatman was almost as unreasonable, I put into practice my plan of taking the train as far as the crossing of the Caroni, eleven miles from town, trusting to be able to return part of the way in the canoe of some peasant or fisherman.

Before commencing my journey the relation of the railway line to the river must be explained. Both run almost due east and west as far as St. Joseph, about seven miles from Port of Spain, the river keeping its course about two miles south of the railway. After this, the eastern branch of the railway and the river continue in somewhat the same direction, although in more varied relations to each other, while the southern branch, turning off here, crosses the Caroni four miles further on, the station of that name being on the southern or further bank of the river. Trinidad is the only British West Indian Island where there are second-class carriages, owing probably to the greater number of middle-class people here than in Jamaica and Barbados, where only a first and a third class are run. On leaving the town the train passes between Laventille Hill and the swamp of the same name, where mangrove scrub occupies the space between the railway and the river for the first two or three miles. We then drew away from the hills and the swamp, passing through pasture land and small settlements which lie between the town and the large cane estates further on. St. Joseph is a quiet little settlement which no one would suspect of having been the former capital of the Island, being now merely a straggling village, near which the Government farm is situated. In the four-mile stretch between St. Joseph and Caroni the train in its southern course leaves the range behind it, passing over a considerable extent of flat country where rice is cultivated by the East Indians. The rice harvest was now over in the month of January,



although the rectangular plots of open ground, banked up at their sides for the purpose of inundating the crop in due season, could plainly be seen. In the winter the same ground appears to be used for growing vegetables.

On arriving at Caroni station I walked towards some cottages, where I made inquiries as to whether there was an available canoe to carry me down the river. The result, however, was very disappointing, the only canoe being out of repair, besides which the local conditions were not favourable for seeing the surrounding country in this manner. The river, indeed, is here neither a broad expanse, as lower down, nor a typical West Indian watercourse, being a deep and narrow tidal creek with mud banks, so that, even if I could have obtained a canoe, there would have been no view from the level of the water until I had reached much nearer to the sea. I now wished to retrace my steps in the direction of the railway line, hoping to see something of interest before arriving at St. Joseph, where I meant to take the next return train. An unforeseen difficulty, however, presented itself at the very start. The bridge over the river was only built for railway purposes and foot passengers are obliged to step from sleeper to sleeper at a considerable height above the water, which was very apparent between the large gaps. Many people experience no difficulty in a passage of this kind, but others like myself become giddy, so I was thankful to accept a lift in a railway truck which was returning more than a mile along the line, and passed over several smaller bridges which spanned straight watercourses having the appearance of irrigation trenches. The men in the truck were English-speaking negroes, probably Barbadians employed on the railway line, and they well deserved their recompense for helping me out of the difficulty. After passing these uncomfortable bridges I was able to enjoy the walk of two or three miles towards St. Joseph over the level agricultural land. The vast plain offered such a poor field for photography that my attention became directed towards the East Indians, whom I now saw in considerable numbers engaged in their field work. So near the town they did not take as much notice of a white stranger as they would have done in the more remote districts; still, whenever we passed each other at close quarters their manner was perfectly courteous, and their salutation, "*Salām!*" or "*Salām, sahib!*" afforded an agreeable contrast to the familiar and begging appeal of so many of the British negroes.

If, however, my first expedition had been somewhat of a failure, most of the subsequent ones were more successful, owing in great measure to the hospitality received from the owners and managers of the plantations, thus enabling a stranger to acquire a knowledge of country life not otherwise obtainable. The first help in this direction came from Mr. Sellier, at whose studio I developed my photographs. On hearing me say that I wished to make the ascent of Mount Tucuche, the highest elevation in the Island, he kindly offered to give me a letter of introduction to Mr. Hernandez, whose cocoa estate lies at the foot of the mountain. The prospect of a pleasant expedition was enhanced by hearing an account of the beauty of the Maracas River, which heads in this direction, so that there were three objectives to the journey—the ascent of Tucuche, the visit to a cocoa estate, and the views of the river.



On the very next morning, therefore, after my Caroni expedition, I started for St. Joseph by the early morning train, which thus gave me a lift on my way for the first seven miles. Although La Soledad, the estate of Mr. Hernandez, is only a distance of six miles from St. Joseph I decided it would be better to drive, in case my arrival on foot might give a bad impression. My direction in the train had been almost due east; from St. Joseph, however, the valley of the Maracas River heads northwards on its way to the great range of which Mount Tucuche is the highest peak, at an elevation of something over three thousand feet. The driver of the buggy was a Barbadian negro who had come to Trinidad when he was quite young, about thirty years ago. He told me that in his earlier years nothing but creole French used to be spoken, but that now the younger people were beginning to talk English. In return, the contact with creole manners had left their impress on the Barbadian in the form of that genial courtesy more prevalent in the foreign islands. We crossed the Maracas River for the first time about a mile from St. Joseph, recrossing it subsequently so often that my first notes on this expedition record the number of times as "too many to count." The scenery was lovely, but I did not wish to retard the ascent of Tucuche by taking photographs at the commencement of the journey, and owing to the goodness of the road and the well-graded ascent we must have arrived in a little more than an hour at La Soledad, where I presented my letter of introduction and was most hospitably received.

This river, however, cannot be dismissed in a few words, as before leaving Trinidad I had gradually become aware that it is second to none in the Island for beauty, nor are there many in the West Indies to be compared with it. On the last day, therefore, before my departure I returned to St. Joseph for the express purpose of taking away some record of its charms. On this occasion, when the driver of the buggy informed me that the road crossed the river eight times in the first four miles, I told him to take me to the furthest crossing, and that I would choose the places for my photographs as we went along. There are so many pretty views here which vie with each other in displaying the charms of West Indian foliage, not to be beaten by the highland scenery of Jamaica at its very best, that it was hard to make the selection, especially as my driver, an East Indian born in Trinidad, and a devout follower of the Prophet, discoursed so eloquently on the Mahomedan religion that my attention was somewhat distracted from the immediate terrestrial environment. Speaking more like an educated man than one in his class of life, he said that most of the converts to Christianity came from the Hindu immigrants, but, he added, "They don't get many of us." He referred contemptuously to idolators, and praised the habit of fasting as being good, "even for the body." When I remarked that Mahomedanism, although containing much that was fine, was rather a persecuting religion, he answered, "Oh, they don't do that now"—a remark with which some of the Christians in the East might not agree. On arriving at the eighth and last crossing I was obliged to leave off conversing so that I might concentrate my attention on the landscape surrounding the lovely little

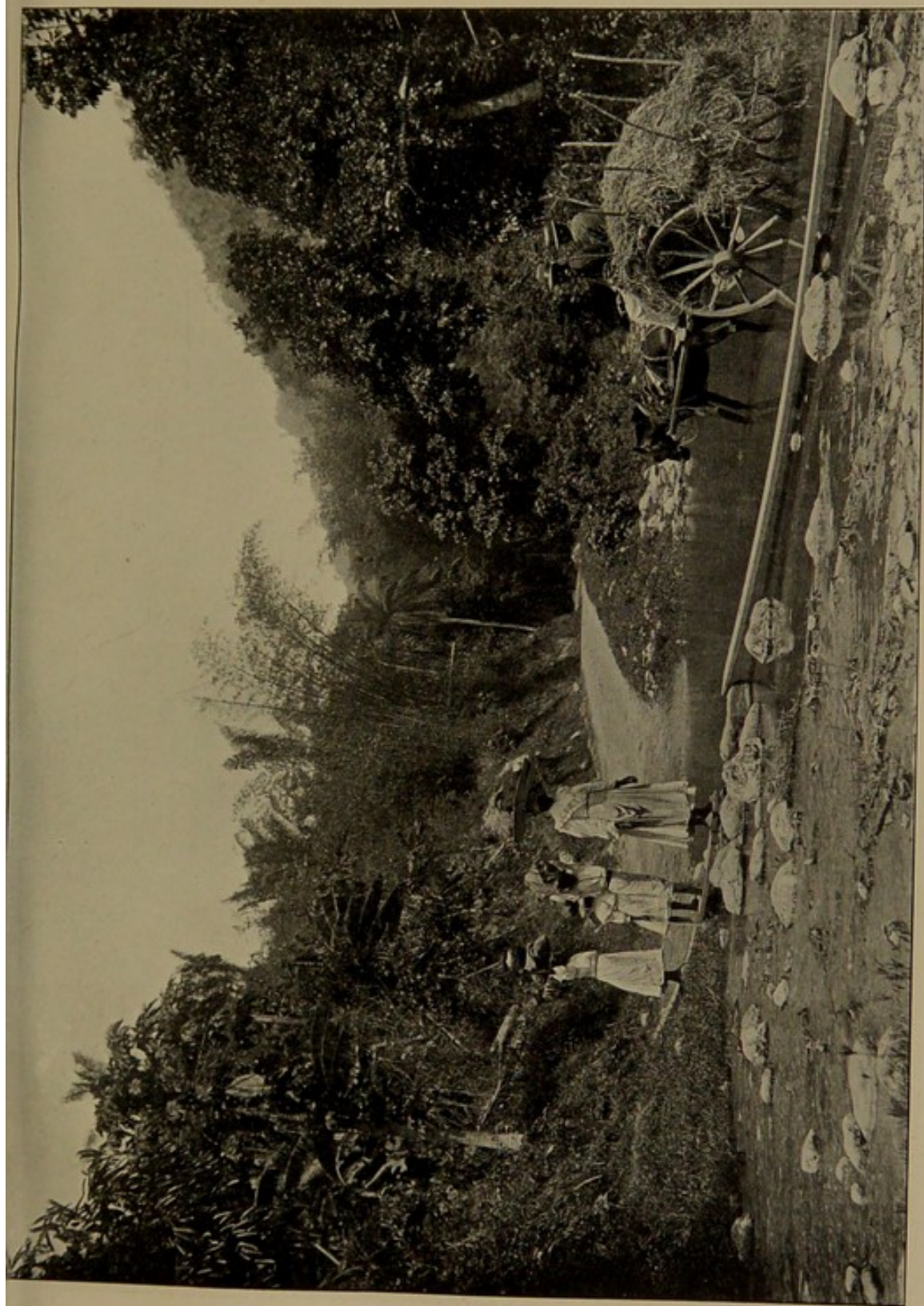


Maracas River, where the foliage at the sides of the valley is so luxuriant that the traveller only partially realizes that he is passing between hills. In many places the cocoa trees grow right up to the road, which, as it were, forms an avenue between them. On the banks of the river itself are a profusion of those wild plants which are always seen where Nature displays herself to most advantage in the West Indies, seldom, however, to the extent in which they are seen here. The graceful bamboo is perhaps the most conspicuous, forming a feathery fringe at the very edge of the water; while at frequent intervals the plantain, the coco-nut palm, and the bread-fruit tree line the road and the river. And, as if not to be outdone by the beauty of its surroundings, the little river itself is a typical mountain stream, running over pebbles and gushing between small rocks, with its waters sometimes sparkling in the light of the sun, and at other times under the deep shade of the luxuriant foliage. Wooden planks are laid in places on the stones and rocks in the shallow stream, forming primitive bridges over which creole and coolie pass, for there is some population in the vicinity, although the houses are not sufficiently numerous to spoil the landscape.

We must now return to the cocoa estate where I had just arrived. Its name, La Soledad (solitude), was very appropriate from the position near the highest peak of the long mountain range whose summit, thickly clad with forest trees, forms a huge barrier precluding all heavy traffic from the northern side. Another proof of the isolation of the district was the language spoken by some of its inhabitants. This was, indeed, one of those remote places where Spanish is still spoken to a slight extent, although even here almost displaced by creole French. In the present instance the family of Mr. Hernandez had inherited their estates from the times of the Spaniards, whose language was generally used in his house. On explaining that I was desirous of making the ascent of Mount Tucuche, Mr. Hernandez provided me with guides in the persons of two young negroes who worked on his estate. Owing to a recent illness he was not able to accompany me himself, but a young friend who was visiting the house offered to go in his stead. I hardly realized that this was rather an arduous undertaking, else I might have shrunk from giving so much trouble to others or even to myself, as La Soledad is already at an elevation of fifteen hundred feet and it seemed such an easy matter to climb the latter half of the distance. Mr. Hernandez, who understood the nature of the ascent, suggested that I should leave my coat behind, a thoughtful advice which I followed with benefit to myself.

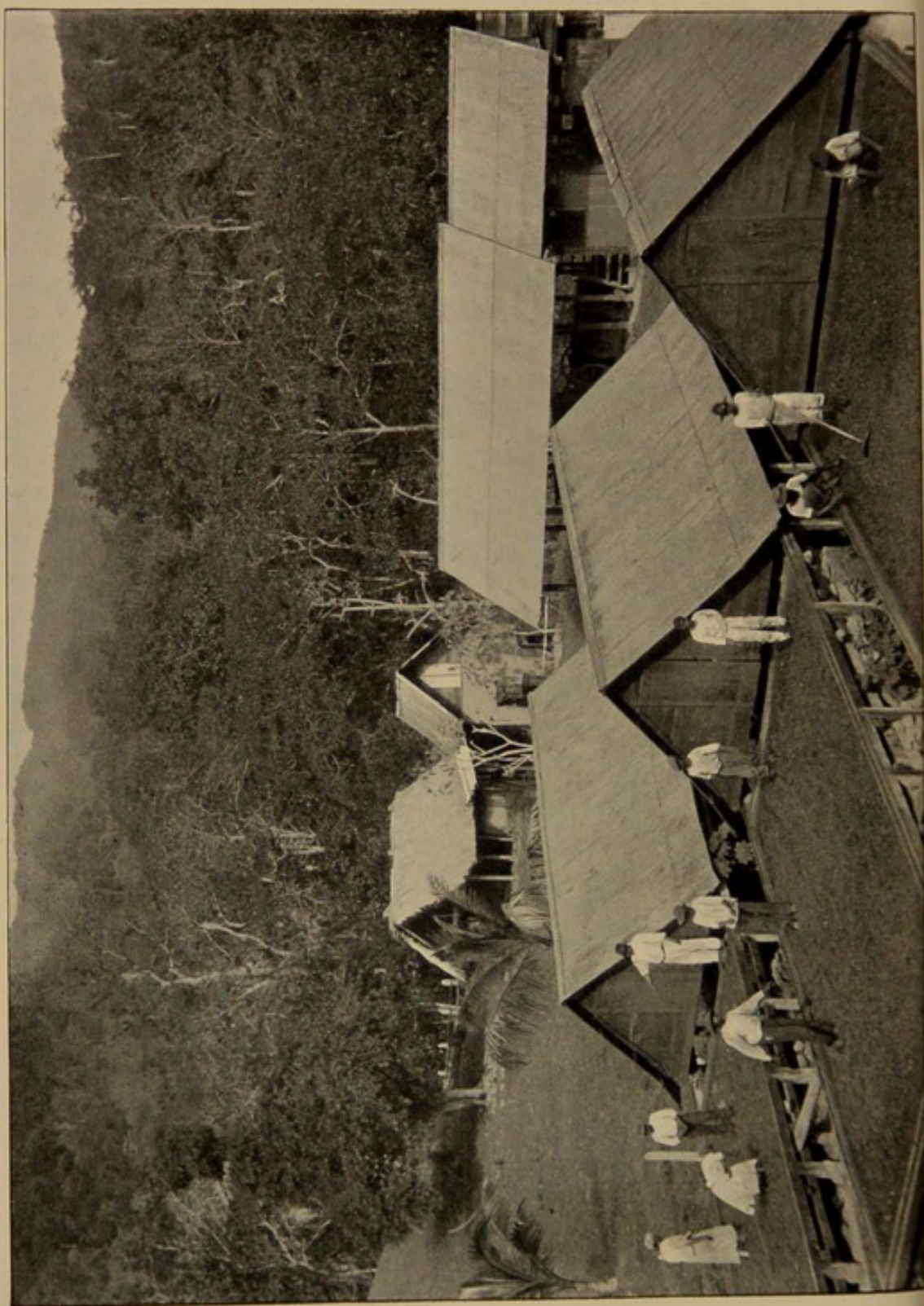
We had a substantial breakfast in the latter part of the morning and started soon after noon. The ascent of the first five hundred feet lay among cocoa trees, which at any rate shielded us from the glare of the sun. There was, however, no road, unless indeed a scarcely perceptible track in places might be given that name. One of the chief difficulties was the extreme dryness of the ground after a prolonged drought, owing to which a person wearing boots is likely to slip in making an ascent on so hard a surface. This, while not affecting the barefoot negro guides, was the cause of my stumbling so many times that before we reached the end of the cocoa country I was already aware that I had undertaken a troublesome expedition. When





Second crossing of the Maracas River from St. Joseph.







we reached the zone of the forest reserve at about two thousand feet the difficulty of the ascent became greater. The land under cocoa cultivation had indeed been very slippery, but the ground was at least clean under foot; when, however, we entered the wild forest country no attempt had been made to clear away the obstacles which Nature imposes in such wild regions, such as projecting roots of trees, creepers, bushes and low-hanging branches, so that while the ground remained almost as slippery as before we were now constantly obliged to bend our bodies and to make slight deviations in order to avoid unforeseen difficulties. I had long ago handed over the camera to one of the guides, who now provided me with a sharp-pointed stick to aid me in the ascent. This young fellow spoke to me in Spanish, while with the others he conversed in creole French. It would require a botanist to describe the region which we now entered, for at any elevation of much over two thousand feet the trees usually met in the tropics either disappear or at least become scarce. The vegetation gradually assumed a family resemblance to that of other places at the same altitude in the West Indies, forming indeed a dense mass of verdure, but of a stunted and scrubby description which contained little that was tropical except a few dwarf plantains, while ferns became plentiful in the cool and misty region of the higher levels. We came out on the circuitous Government road about half-a-mile from the rest-house at the summit of the mountain, where we arrived just in time to escape being wet by a drenching storm, after an arduous climb of three hours and a half. The house was in a rather dilapidated condition, although the roof was still sound.

When the rain had finished we left our shelter to look at the commanding view which one has a right to expect at an altitude of more than three thousand feet. My companion, the friend of Mr. Hernandez, told me that we were only between one and two miles in a straight line from the northern coast, yet neither coast-line nor sea were visible owing to the grey mist which still hung over the summit of the mountain and shrouded everything which lay at a distance. Presently, however, the vapour partially cleared, allowing us to see a hazy panorama of the shore over which we were perched, with Maracas Bay slightly to our left. On turning the camera towards the long eastern mountain chain the result was equally unsatisfactory, as the dull green foliage, over which wreaths of vapour still hung, gave no promise of success.

After a rest of about three-quarters of an hour we commenced the return journey at half-past four in the afternoon. The Government road was so good in comparison with the way by which we had come that I wished to return by it, even though this would entail a walk of twelve miles instead of a straight descent of four, including, perhaps, several falls. I suggested, therefore, to my companion that he should descend by the short cut if he liked and that one of the guides might be left to accompany me on the longer road. He was, however, too polite to leave me, so we all returned by the excellent gradient of the Government road, arriving indeed near the foot of the mountain before dark, but not reaching La Soledad until some time afterwards, where Mr. Hernandez was beginning to be anxious about us. It had been a journey of sixteen miles, but to a person like myself, accustomed



to walking rather than climbing, it would have been easier to have taken the Government road each way, even at the expense of another eight miles. I had been, however, on the top of Tucuche, although I had nothing to show for my trouble except a certain stiffness on the following morning, which caused the Spanish-speaking cook to remark with a smile that I appeared "*algo estropeado*" (somewhat damaged).

This, however, did not prevent me from doing a fair day's work. In the morning I photographed the plantation hands engaged at working among the cocoa beans between the house and the drying sheds, beyond which the lower spurs of the mountain range appear in the background. One man may be seen raking the beans so that they may be equally exposed. Three or four others are evidently "dancing" the cocoa, by which term is meant the action of treading on the beans, so as to remove the dry pulp. Two or three are stooping, probably to remove extraneous matter or bad beans. The man who is standing with his arm stretched out, in the act of giving directions to the others, is an interesting person, being no less than the native Indian major-domo on the plantation. There are so few of this race left in Trinidad that if I had known the facts of the case in time I would have photographed the man by himself. In connection with the grandfather of this very Indian, Mr. Hernandez told me the following amusing story, which is repeated as nearly as possible in his words:—

Patiño, the Indian, was on the banks of the Caura River fifty years ago, carrying, as was his custom, some rum in a gourd, when the Governor drove up in a buggy. (The Governors in those days, as was pointedly remarked, used to inspect the roads personally to make sure that everything was in order.) The Governor got out of the buggy to drink the river-water, whereupon the Indian cursed him several times for a fool and offered him some rum instead. Both rum and curses were taken in good part, after which the Indian went away without knowing whom he had met. In due time, however, he received an order to go to the Governor's house. "But what have I done?" said the frightened man. "Do they want to put me into prison?" At first he refused to obey the summons, and when he found that his riverside acquaintance was the Governor he became even more alarmed, but eventually he was induced to go. The Governor, influenced by the rum rather than the curses, received the Indian in a kindly manner and made him a present of five carrés<sup>1</sup> of land. When the Indian subsequently related the account of his reception, he made the following regretful remark: "I cursed him five times and he gave me five carrés of land; if I had cursed him ten times he would have given me ten!" It would be interesting to know in which of the many languages spoken in Trinidad the Indian had addressed the Governor and whether he broke down from want of proficiency like my roadside acquaintance at Maraval.

Later in the morning I went out in search of more views, after which my host gave me breakfast before my departure from this hospitable estate, where the language of the house was Spanish, that

<sup>1</sup> A carré =  $3\frac{1}{2}$  acres.



of the plantation hands creole French, and where the owner was well acquainted with English, the official language of his country. I was now provided with a guide to take me some two or three miles to the Maracas waterfall, one of the sights of the place, on my way back to St. Joseph. This view is rather disappointing, as the waterfall can only be seen at such close quarters that its entire length cannot be photographed. The amount of water, also, had become so attenuated by the long drought that it presented the appearance of a gigantic shower-bath. On returning to the main road, I sent my guide home and now had a weary walk of at least six miles to St. Joseph, carrying all my belongings. Reaching the railway station in a rather draggled condition, I asked for a third-class ticket to Port-of-Spain. The negro ticket-seller, thinking probably that no white person could want to travel thus, tendered me one for the second class, obliging me to emphasize my demand by saying, "A third-class ticket, as I'm too untidy to travel in the second class and cannot get at my coat, which is stuffed into the bottom of my bag." Nightfall, however, shrouded the deficiencies of my attire before I arrived at Port-of-Spain, tired, but conscious of having commenced a more intimate acquaintance with Trinidad by climbing its highest mountain.



## CHAPTER XXV.

## IN TRINIDAD.

THERE is probably no part of Trinidad which a stranger fond of adventure will have a greater desire to see than the Nariva Cocal. Many reasons contribute towards this. Its situation on the eastern coast, nine miles distant at the nearest part from the terminus of the railway at Sangre Grande, encourages the longing to see what is far away ; the length of the Cocal, or coco-nut walk, some thirteen miles along the shore of the Atlantic, gives rise to a feeling of wonder at the continental immensity of such a panorama in a West Indian island, while a special interest is caused by its comparative isolation from the rest of Trinidad by the Nariva River and its accessories, which form a combination, of river, tidal creek, lagoon and mangrove swamp extending over miles of country impassable by the ordinary means of travelling on land or water because both are here so intimately blended. To these somewhat sentimental attractions must be added the eminently practical one of this district being the oldest centre of that important coco-nut industry in which Trinidad perhaps now takes the lead of the whole of the West Indies.

In my own case the wish to see this part had been intensified by reading Kingsley's "At Last," but, unlike the illustrious author, I had no introductions or friends except those provided by unforeseen circumstances, and was therefore uncertain about the method which should be adopted in visiting a place where there seemed to be no accommodation for strangers. While I was thus undecided the names of Gerold and Schreer over a large house of business near the sea-front attracted my attention. The former of these names appears in the very book just mentioned, in connection with the "coco-works" of Messrs. Ulrich and Gerold at the Nariva Cocal. Emboldened by the chance of obtaining useful information, I entered the building, where the clerk must have been surprised at my somewhat vague inquiry as to whether the firm was still connected with the Nariva Cocal and could give me any information about it. Eventually I was brought to the office, where a gentleman, young in appearance but evidently a person in authority, received me courteously, and in reply to my inquiry said that his grandfather had owned a property in that locality. He was himself, however, well acquainted with its leading features, and sent one of the clerks to buy a small map of Trinidad for me, so that I might better understand his description of the Nariva district. From his account it appeared that, in this thirteen miles of palm-fringed shore between Manzanilla and Mayaro, the only place where a stranger could obtain shelter at night was at the house of Mr. Bovell.



the manager of the Nariva Cocal. He further said that it was more than probable that I should be well received and given the desired opportunity to see the plantation. At the terminus of Sangre Grande, nearly thirty miles from the capital, there were public conveyances to the coast at Manzanilla, nine miles further on, after which I should have to make my way as best I could for the last five miles to the manager's house.

It was this very walk of five miles which made me anxious, not on account of the distance, but because I knew that the back country abounded in swamps, and I was rather apprehensive about the crossing of the Doubloon River which was marked on the very map just bought. Those who have read Kingsley's "At Last" will remember that this so-called river was a short canal by which these very swamps were connected with the sea, forming a neutral zone in which might be encountered the interesting but formidable inhabitants of fresh and salt water, such as anacondas and sharks, in whose domains a narrow channel of even moderate depth cannot always be crossed with impunity. My apprehensions were relieved on hearing that the Doubloon River had been filled up, so that in the event of having to make my way on foot there would only be an extent of sandy beach unbroken by river or swamp.

The only preparations for the journey were the same essentials as on former occasions—the camera, a minute handbag, and a change of clothes wrapped up in a small blanket.

Starting by the morning train, I now went over the same ground as before as far as St. Joseph, after which, instead of turning to the south, the eastern branch of the railway continues its course in almost the same direction as before. We now entered upon part of that large expanse of country under sugarcane which extends over the western side of the Island, bearing such a family resemblance to land under the same cultivation in other places, that it is hardly necessary to describe the flat open surface from which all the trees have been removed. This surface, however, is considerably more level in Trinidad than in Barbados, where the term "rolling" might be aptly used to describe the continual undulations. Between D'Abadie and Arima, however, the cultivation of sugarcane gives way to that of cocoa, which is the staple agricultural product of the central parts of the Island. The train now continued its level course through forests of these profitable trees, which did not, however, extend continuously to the eastern coast, as in several places we passed through a jungle of native foliage. This was especially noticeable between Cumuto and Guaico, beyond which the agriculture was almost uninterrupted. The explanation of a fellow-passenger was that most of this unused country was sandy soil, and not suitable for cocoa.

At Sangre Grande I had finished the first section of my journey, about thirty miles of level country, in an hour and a half. This little township presents an animated appearance at the arrival of a train, when the approach of money-spending travellers makes a considerable number of the inhabitants anxious to receive their share of patronage. The exit from the railway station was so besieged by a large number of buggies that I was unable to see the motor-bus which conveys passengers to Manzanilla.



A Chinese buggy-driver, whose name was Ah Fat, now approached, offering to drive me the whole nine miles for three shillings—a price so moderate that I did not trouble further about the motor-bus, which would have cost me a few pence less. The nationalities of my buggy drivers—Barbadian, Chinese, and East Indian—were certainly very characteristic of the mixture of races in this Island, but the devout Mahomedan was by far the most interesting person of the three. We soon reached the outskirts of Sangre Grande, which, in spite of its ordinary wooden houses, looked more interesting than most West Indian country towns owing to the Oriental appearance imparted by a considerable number of coolies. This characteristic was continued throughout the whole length of the drive, partly by the frequent *salāms* received from these people on the road, and the sight of their neat little mud houses, and partly from the considerable number of Chinese stores, which proclaimed their nationality in unmistakable names on the roadside. Even the negroes, who here appeared in less overwhelming proportions than in the other islands, seemed to be influenced by that blend of creole and Oriental courtesy so characteristic of Trinidad.

The country now changed considerably in appearance. As far as Sangre Grande, whether the land lay under cane, cocoa, or forest, there had been a dead level nearly the whole way; between here and Manzanilla, however, there was a succession of hills and dales almost entirely devoted to the cultivation of cocoa. This sloping landscape was decidedly more picturesque than that along the railway line, as even fertile country will weary the eye if it presents a uniformly flat surface. Once or twice there was another passenger besides myself, for I could hardly expect to have the exclusive use of the buggy at such a low charge; but during the last mile or two I was the only occupant, and eventually Ah Fat deposited me among the coco-nut trees at the northern extremity of the Cocal, close to the watchman's cottage and to the sea, informing me before he left that two carts had just passed laden with coco-nuts for the neighbouring depôt, and that I would be able to get a lift in them on their return journey to the Cocal house. Shortly before reaching the grove which lines the shore we had passed over a perceptible dip in the ground, which, although dry at the crossing place, was evidently the commencement of that depression terminating in the swamp a little further on.

I now sat down under the shade of the coco-nut palms awaiting the return of the carts. The wife of the East Indian watchman, from the door of her little wooden house, now entered into conversation with me in very intelligible pidgin-English, acquired during a residence of many years in Trinidad. She was evidently of a mercantile frame of mind, being anxious to know how much the Chinaman had charged me for the drive, and on my informing her of the cost, which to me seemed very moderate, she remarked, "He too much foolee you." On large plantations like this it will be readily understood how necessary it is to have watchmen on the outlying parts in order to restrain as far as possible the so-called predial larceny somewhat prevalent in the West Indies. Although tragedies like the one described in Carriacou do not often occur, the frequent thefts of small quantities of a crop at



maturity have often had a disastrous effect on the profits of the cultivator. It is far from easy to catch a thief who commits his depredations by night on some distant part of the plantation, especially when, as is often the case, a public road runs through it. In connection with this is told the amusing story of the planter who, having found watchmen and police unavailing, succeeded in saving his crops by consulting an obeah-man, whose services must have been worth a high figure. The obeah-man is said to have hung bottles containing white feathers and other recognized signs of his calling upon the trees with the desired effect of acting upon the superstitious fears of marauders.

After waiting about half an hour the two carts appeared through the trees, on their homeward journey. The first of the coolie drivers did not apparently understand English, but his more proficient companion readily agreed to take me with him. We now left the loose sandy soil under the coco-nut trees for the firmer, wet sand over which the waves occasionally lapped. This stretch along the shore of Cocos Bay, thirteen miles between Manzanilla and Mayaro, is one of those vast scenes occasionally met in the larger West Indian Islands. To the left in our southern course was the long expanse of the ocean, whose waves, breaking far off on the flat beach, dashed their waters under our feet; to the right was the higher part of the beach fringed with the long grove of coco-nut palms which extended for so many miles, while in front of us the headland of Mayaro Point could dimly be seen at the end of the bay. I looked wistfully for signs of swamp or river, but, although there seemed to be a slight fall in the ground on the inland side of the plantation, nothing definite could be seen from so low a level. At the steady trot kept up by the mules we could hardly have taken more than an hour to cover the five miles between the watchman's cottage and the manager's house. I was in fact made aware of our arrival by a sign from the East Indian, who pointed in the direction of the trees, through which I could now see signs of human habitation, so giving the driver his well-earned recompense I took my small luggage in my hands and walked across the beach into the grove of trees which surrounded the house.

I need not have felt anxious about my reception, for on making my excuses to Mr. Bovell for being obliged to trespass on his hospitality he made me cordially welcome and assigned me a good bedroom. He also promised to take me out for a drive on the following morning so that I might obtain suitable photographs, and in the meantime I was made quite at home in this hospitable house, where between residents and visitors quite a fair-sized party of people were assembled. The house itself will be better described by the photograph than by words, being built after the style of the better-class West Indian plantation houses, a one-storied building raised on pillars some twelve feet in height, the space between the rooms and the ground being utilized as buggy-shed, storeroom, &c.

During the afternoon Mr. Bovell accompanied me on foot to the Nariva River, which runs at the back of the house, parallel with the sea. It was only a distance of a few hundred yards, the intervening space being filled with coco-nut trees. The river itself was what



might be expected from its position between sea and swamp, a tidal creek lined at intervals with mangrove scrub. At the place where we approached, however, the bank was clear of foliage and dry to the water's edge. The channel was here comparatively narrow, perhaps only thirty yards across, but of irregular formation, looking as if it might be deep in one part and shallow in another. The appearance of its dark and silent waters brought the snake story in "At Last" vividly before me. The four girls had preferred to bathe in some such place as this rather than in the sea, which indeed is not here suitable for such a purpose, owing to the flatness of the shore and the large breakers further out. One of the girls, fortunately in shallow water, felt something catch hold of her, and on looking up saw that this could not have been done by her sisters, who were now on the bank. The huillia or anaconda had, indeed, approached from behind and seized her dress. Her scream of terror brought immediate assistance from the brave girls, who rushed into the water and pulled their sister out, while the snake, never relinquishing his hold on the clothes, tore them off and slunk back with them into the depths of the river. Mr. Bovell told me that one of these very sisters was now living in Sangre Grande. The story seems more fitted for some wild continent than for a West Indian island, but Trinidad is only cut off from South America by a narrow channel, and many a living creature, washed down with timber in the stream of the mighty Orinoco, has been deposited on its shores.

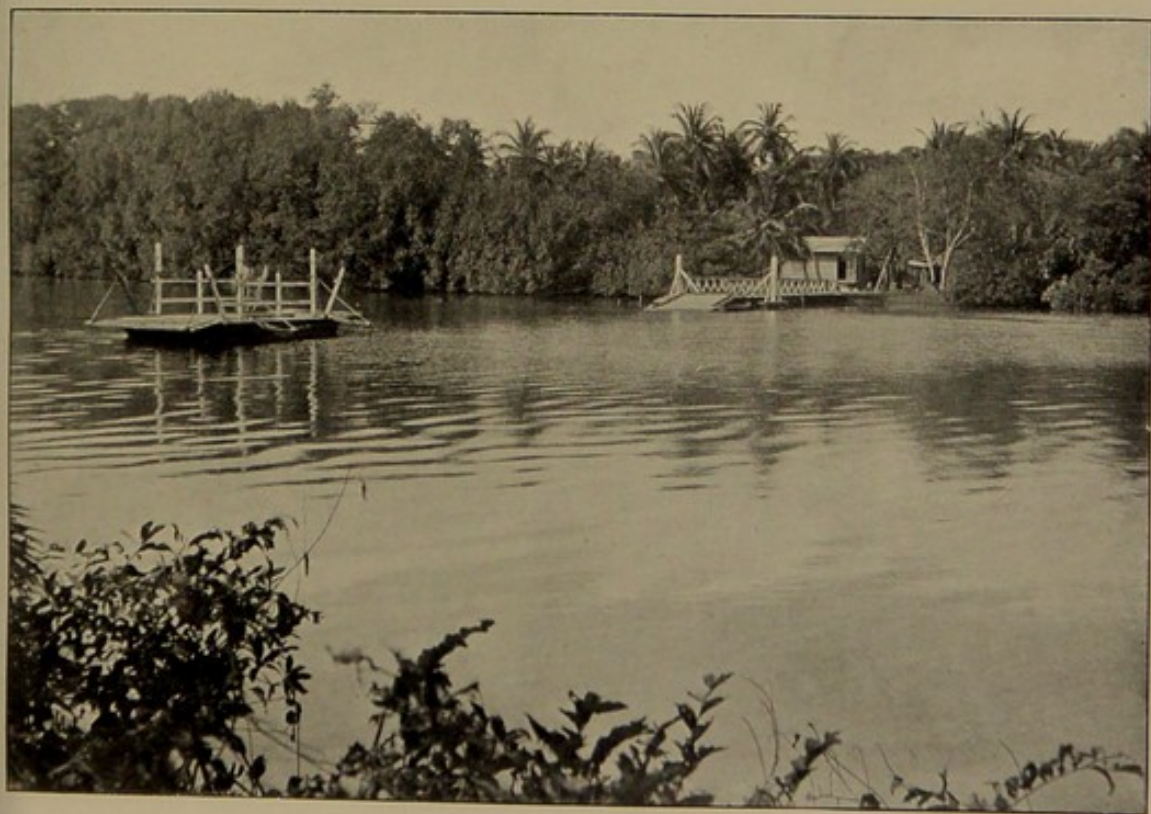
Few places in my travels have stirred my imagination to such an extent as the situation of this house in the Nariva Cocal. There are certain scenes framed, so to say, on such a gigantic scale that they are never forgotten because they rarely recur in a lifetime. This was one of them. During the day and the earlier part of the evening the company of so large a family party distracted the attention, but in the solitude of the night the impressive situation could be better realized. The open window of my room placed me on a level with the foliage of the palms which surrounded the house on all sides, a study in light and shade under the bright moon. They could be seen to sway in the sea-breeze, yet their sound, so aptly sung by the Cuban troubadour as "lulling to sleep," was scarcely audible, merged as it was in the louder music of the long rollers of the Atlantic which broke on the beach and spent their force only sixty yards away.

On the following morning we went out in one of those little two-wheeled buggies so popular on West Indian plantations. The courtesy of the manager in thus showing me over the place was an invaluable advantage for a stranger in this peculiar locality, about which a few words of explanation are desirable. The Nariva River is a tidal creek fed inland by several miles of swamp waters known as the Nariva Lagoon. Swamp and river commence near the northern extremity of the Cocal and run southwards parallel with the sea, the distance between river and sea being nowhere more than a quarter of a mile across. This narrow strip, on which the house is situated, forms the northern part of the Cocal. About two miles and a half below the house the river runs into the sea, and from here the southern part of the Cocal extends along the beach several miles further towards





The House of the Nariva Cocal.

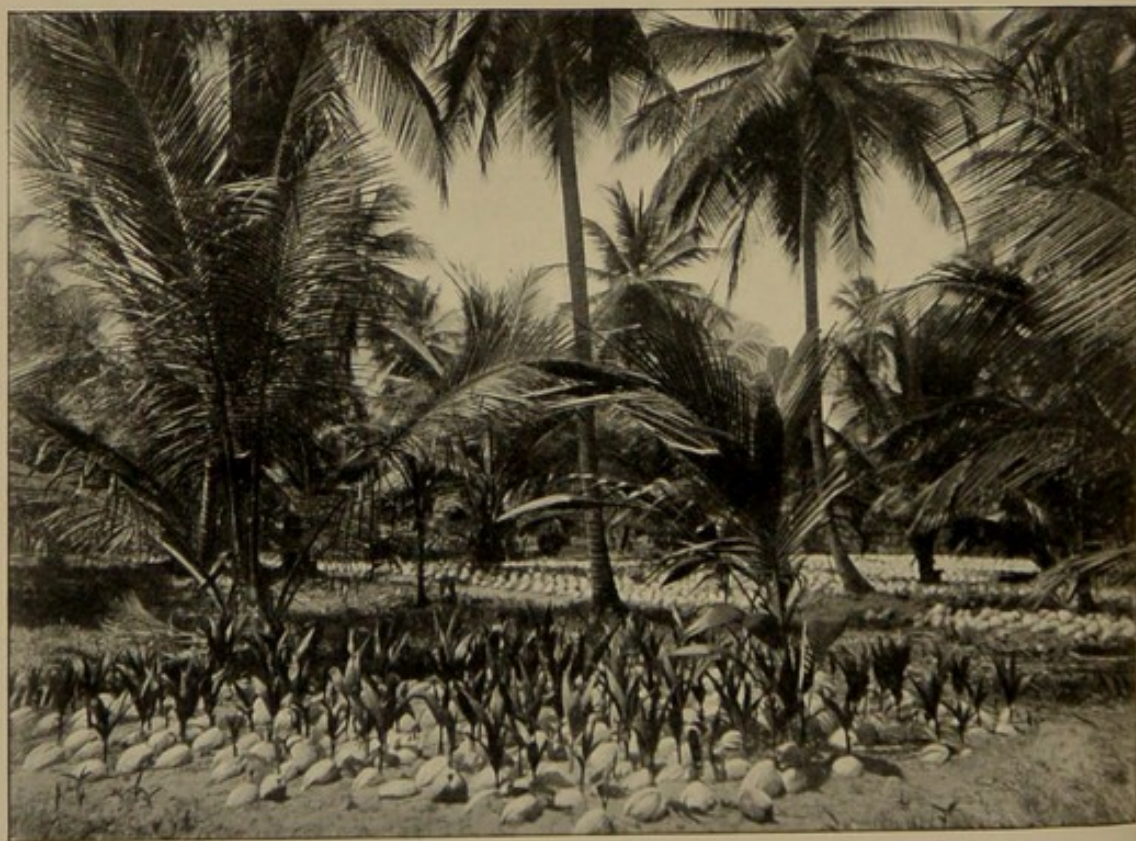


The Ferry of the Nariva River, five miles below the House.





Coolies "Husking" Coco-nuts.



Coco-nut Nursery; in the foreground the trees are sprouting from the nuts.



Mayaro, with the swamp at its back for a considerable part of the way.

We now travelled along the sandy track between sea and river, under the shade of the valuable trees, which occupied the whole available space. Two miles below the house is the Nariva ferry, by which all traffic has to be conveyed, owing to the impassable nature of the back country, which compels the sea-front to be used as a main road. The enormous increase in the volume of water gives this ferry an imposing appearance. It will be remembered that only two miles above, at the back of the house, the river has been assumed to be only thirty yards wide. I will form no rash estimate of its size at the ferry, as water distances are deceptive, but the photograph suggests an expanse of a few hundred yards. The so-called river, however, is an estuary of the sea, from which it is here only half a mile distant. This mode of crossing large watercourses where no bridge has been erected is often used in the more remote parts of the world, and a similar one has been described in my adventures in Spanish-America, where at Cancura in the south of Chile an ox-cart was thus conveyed over the river by means of a large raft of this kind attached to a wire cable. Mr. Bovell now signalled to the ferryman to come out in mid-channel so that the ferry might be better seen, and even asked me if I would like to cross. When, however, he assured me that the southern end of the Cocal was of a similar description, I thought it was more prudent to be content with having seen the greater part and to allow myself time to take my photographs. On the farther bank the mangrove scrub can plainly be seen overhanging the river, but the few coco-nut palms do not appear to be in their proper element so close to plants which take root in swampy water.

We now followed the river downwards to its junction with the sea, half a mile farther on, where Mr. Bovell found on the sand an Indian paddle, which he declared had been washed up from the Orinoco. This Venezuelan river discharges itself much nearer the southern coast of Trinidad than the eastern, but my companion was confident about his assertion, and of course he knew best. The paddle at any rate was unmistakably Indian, and it would be interesting to know of the voyages which it had helped its owner to make by river and sea or how it had become separated from him. Venezuelan Indians, indeed, occasionally make voyages in their canoes to Trinidad; always, however, returning to the mainland.

From the watchman's cottage where I had arrived on the previous day to the mouth of the Nariva River is a distance of about seven miles and a half, which, together with the five miles and a half south of the river, makes the total of thirteen miles between Manzanilla and Mayaro.

Returning now along the shore, we drove about two miles beyond the house, to look at the place where the Doubloon River had once been. The so-called river had been merely an artificial channel or short canal connecting the Nariva River with the sea. This of course had been a benefit to the district in draining the Nariva River and the swamp behind it, thereby affording an outlet to much of the water which otherwise would have had to pass four miles and a half



farther before reaching the end of its course. The continual wash of water from sea and swamp had eventually caused this channel to become inconveniently large, especially on a strip of the beach so much used as a road, in proof of which may be cited the precautions taken by Charles Kingsley and his companions in crossing where a shark had so recently been seen. In later times someone had been drowned in attempting the passage, whereupon the Government caused the channel to be filled up, which indeed has been done so effectually that I had passed on the previous day without recognizing the spot. The Government, however, is aware of the advantage afforded by this opening as a means of draining the large swamp, five miles across at its apex inland, so it is proposed to reopen the Doubloon channel, this time, however, with the necessary adjunct of a bridge.

On turning homewards through the Cocal, whose sandy soil is so adapted for this agriculture, we saw two East Indians "husking" coco-nuts. Here was one of the representative scenes which I desired. In the foreground are the two indentured coolies, naked to the loin-cloth, engaged in stripping the husks from the pile of nuts before them. The trees are growing in wild profusion, many of them showing the characteristic bend in the lower part of the trunk. This, in my opinion, is one of the beauties of the coco-nut palm, owing to which a grove of these trees never acquires that intensely stiff appearance presented by the cabbage palm (*Palmiste*). The ground is freely littered with leaves, husks and other refuse, while the shore can be seen beyond the buggy in the centre of the picture. Many of the trees on the sea-front are of mature age, being in fact the progeny of beach-combers in the truest sense of the word, shipwrecked nuts which have settled down in the locality most suited to them. From the untrammelled appearance which these trees present on the shores of so many tropical countries the traveller may well suppose that they are growing in a state of nature. This was undoubtedly the case once, and may still be so in some of the more remote places; in the larger centres, however, this palm is now cultivated with extreme care, owing to the great rise in the value of its nuts and the articles of commerce which can be manufactured from them (such as oil, butter, soap, &c.). When Mr. Bovell took over the management of this well-matured plantation some years ago no account had been kept of the number of its trees, which cannot therefore be estimated; since then, however, he has planted the enormous number of forty thousand, and hoped within the next year to plant five thousand more, which may well be credited from a view of the coco-nut nursery.

In this industry Trinidad takes the lead in the British West Indies, with Jamaica for a good second. Some idea of the growth of its importance may be formed by saying that (according to the statistics in Mr. Hamel-Smith's interesting book, "Coco-nuts: The Consols of the East") the export of these nuts from Trinidad has gradually increased from about ten millions in 1888 to about twenty millions in 1911, thus doubling itself in twenty-three years, and as the product itself has also risen greatly in value, many new plantations of these



trees have lately been formed in Trinidad, where coco-nuts now rank as a progressive third among agricultural exports. The increase in cultivation, however, is also attended by an increase of danger. In former times these trees generally planted themselves, or were planted by man, in the most favourable situations, such as that rise on the inner part of a beach which often precedes a slight fall on the inland side, a formation of the coast often seen in the West Indies and typically in the little Island of Cayman Brac. Since, however, coco-nuts have risen in value there has been a tendency to utilize land which is not suitable, such as swampy ground in which trenches have been made in the hope of securing sufficient drainage. Any temporary output thus realized must be at the expense of rearing weakly trees more liable to those diseases which have already devastated some of these islands. The fate of Grand Cayman in this respect has already been noticed, but a far more prominent example is the large Island of Cuba, once the principal West Indian exporter of this product, whose output has been so reduced of late years by the disease known as bud-rot that perhaps it has already ceded the first place to Trinidad.

The Nariva Cocal, therefore, is restricted by Nature to the narrow space of a few hundred yards in breadth between the sea and the river, whose outer bank even is somewhat doubtfully adapted for this purpose, while the swamps on the inland side are not likely to become suitable for coco-nuts by any system of drainage. Thus the newer centre of this industry in the south-western part of the Island presents a much larger area of cultivation than its original home, but consists chiefly of quite young trees, while in the Nariva Cocal are a very large number of mature palms in full bearing, supplemented by the work of the energetic manager, from forward young trees just beginning to bear at five years of age down to countless infant plants in the nursery, where they are seen sprouting about a foot or eighteen inches out of the coco-nuts. Most of the nuts in the background of the photograph have not yet sprouted. I had hoped to have seen the manufacture of some of the artificial products made out of coco-nuts, or at least that process of drying by which the kernel becomes commercially known as copra; Trinidad, however, is so fortunate in finding a ready market that most of its nuts are sent to the United States. This market, however, is a somewhat uncertain one for any produce of the British West Indies. The Americans have now an empire within the tropics, and as soon as they can produce enough to satisfy their wants they may wish to revert to their usual procedure of putting a prohibitive tariff on foreign imports.

In this respect the devastation of the Cuban coco-nuts by disease has been a decided advantage to Trinidad by putting off the evil day, as Cuba would probably receive preferential treatment.

Practically the whole of the work on the Cocal was done by East Indians, with whose services Mr. Bovell expressed himself well satisfied. Like the manager of Denbigh Estate in Jamaica, his preference for the indentured labour of coolies as compared with the free labour of negroes was on account of reliability rather than cheapness. The price of free negro labour was fifty cents per diem, that of indentured coolie labour was twenty-five cents, but with the incidental expenses



attached to the latter (among which are hospital expenses and part of the passage money), the total cost amounted to about forty-three cents, being thus slightly less than negro labour, with the further advantage that the indentured labourer must work, while the negro will leave at a busy time if he wants a holiday. It will be remembered that in Jamaica coolie labour was said to be at least as expensive as that of the negro. This, however, can be explained by the higher rate of free labour in Trinidad, which may be taken to be two shillings per diem, as against one shilling and sixpence in Jamaica. Most of the coolie immigrants were capable of being turned to good account, but of course judicious treatment was necessary. The managers generally find it advisable to learn Hindustani sufficiently well to speak to the East Indians in their own language. The men must be studied individually to find out the class of work for which they are best suited. Occasionally there may be a bad character, as in the case of a professional gambler who had to be returned to the Government. In another case there was a difficulty with a man of high caste who did not like to work with the others and asked to be employed by himself. His request was granted with mutual satisfaction, as he proved very skilful at his solitary occupation.

In India there has arisen a sentiment that the conditions of indentured labour are derogatory, owing to which officials were sent to the West Indies to investigate the condition of the coolies, especially with a view to finding out whether they would not be equally acceptable as free labourers. In my opinion the system of indenture, or binding agreement to work for a specified period, is indispensable, unless, indeed, it can be supposed that India will pay the emigrants' passage and all incidental expenses. The East Indian is generally a desirable colonist, but if he arrived without any obligation to work he would only inefficiently fulfil the condition of supplying the planters with reliable labour, and they would not find it worth their while to contribute towards his coming. How, for example, could they be expected to pay the passage money of a man who might prefer to be a street pedlar rather than an agricultural labourer? No disparagement is hereby meant to the East Indian, who by his mercantile ability has often raised himself above the condition of a labourer, thus helping to form that middle class so much required; if, however, he is brought out at the expense of the colony he ought to be obliged to do his turn of work for those who have paid for him before he works for himself.

At the time of my visit to the Cocal, early in the year, the sea-breeze blowing westerly over the shore imparted an agreeable freshness which is said to be the prevailing condition for the greater part of the year. There is, however, a short season during the summer when the wind fails, or even reverses its usual direction, at which period the proximity of the swamp makes itself unpleasantly felt by the arrival of those troublesome insects which frequent such localities. Fortunately, the wind soon blows away these unwelcome visitors by resuming its normal direction.

My short but interesting visit was now drawing to a close, leaving, however, the recollection of that kindness which had made a pleasure



out of what promised to be a rather troublesome undertaking. In the evening there was the same pleasant company in the cool corridor, whose shutters appear open in the view of the house; in the night there was the same ocean song, although the waving palm-trees hid the singer from view. The scene has vanished but the memory of it often returns. Next morning my kindly host sent me in the buggy as far as the watchman's house at Manzanilla, from where I was conveyed to the railway at Sangre Grande in one of the carriages which ply along this road. My thoughts were so occupied with the many things I had seen in so short a time that the return journey in the train passed almost unnoticed, and it seemed hardly credible that this was only the third day since my departure from Port-of-Spain.



## CHAPTER XXVI.

## IN TRINIDAD.

**A**BOUT three weeks after my arrival in Port-of-Spain I felt that it was desirable to change my headquarters to some other part of Trinidad, otherwise too much time would be lost in fruitless journeys backwards and forwards. As these headquarters had to include the requirements of board and lodging for myself, together with conveniences for developing my photographs, the choice became somewhat restricted; for although Trinidad will compare not unfavourably with Jamaica in its little country towns, the accommodation for strangers is scarce. This is a decided advantage in the way of escaping from the artificial atmosphere created by the erection of hotels for rich tourists; but the want of a lodging, even of a simple kind, is sometimes inconvenient. My choice almost necessarily fell upon San Fernando for the following reasons. There could be no difficulty about obtaining my requirements in this town of about eight thousand inhabitants, while its position as the southern commercial centre, connected with the neighbouring districts by train, steamer, and motor-bus, left no doubt about facilities for seeing those more remote parts which were quite out of reach from the northern capital. It lies about thirty-five miles south of Port-of-Spain, and is easily reached by the railway, which, towards the end of its course, runs along the western coast.

A traveller, however, has to be very cautious about forming an opinion of a country from what may be called a "bee-line" in a railway carriage, especially in Trinidad, where certain kinds of agriculture are carried on almost exclusively in certain districts; so I decided to leave the main line at Jerningham Junction, two stations beyond Caroni, for the purpose of first following the inland branch to Tabaquite, the then terminus of that railway extension, which had already reached more than a third of the way across the Island towards Mayaro on the eastern coast. This would involve the double journey of about fourteen miles each way from the junction and back, but was well worth the slight trouble and expense. On the present occasion I took most of my belongings with me, as this was a change of headquarters, and not a mere excursion.

In a journey by rail from Port-of-Spain, wherever the traveller may eventually go, he must first follow the same line as far as the old capital of St. Joseph, just as in Jamaica every train from Kingston goes first to the old capital of Spanish Town. The country as far as Caroni was already familiar, but south of this station I entered on



that long stretch of level country under sugarcane which may be said to occupy the whole of the western side of the Island between here and five miles south of San Fernando. The general conditions of this cultivation are somewhat similar throughout the whole of the West Indies, although the vast extent of savanna-like land and the almost exclusive employment of coolie labour are distinguishing characteristics in Trinidad. East Indians, indeed, form the staple supply of labour on most of the larger estates, whether under cane, cocoa, or coco-nuts. The oriental effect of these people engaged at work on the level plain is somewhat lessened by the readiness with which the men abandon their native dress and assume the prosaic shirt and trousers of western civilization. Some are said to discard their former costume a few weeks after their arrival—two distinct reasons being given for such a sudden change: one being that the western garb protects the wearer better while doing field work, and the other that the men become ashamed of their oriental costume, and think they have made a step in advance by dressing like ourselves. Probably the latter reason has most influence with the men; the more conservative women, however, are much less disposed to abandon their flowing headdress.

On arriving at Jerningham Junction I changed for the branch line, which carried me to Tabaquite in about three-quarters of an hour, stopping on the way at six intermediate stations. This short run, however, was interesting for several reasons. We had hardly left the junction when the open country under sugarcane ceased and the train may be said to have run for the rest of the journey through an unbroken forest, which consisted chiefly of the ubiquitous cocoa tree so extensively cultivated in the central parts of the Island. In places, however, the cocoa gave way to a tangle of native growth, and there were even a few patches under the cultivation of bananas. I had seen cocoa in several other West Indian islands, never, however, shaded by the *bois immortel* to the same extent as in Trinidad, where the large red flowers of the latter tree become mentally associated with a cocoa plantation. For many years it has been an unsettled question whether it is necessary to shelter cocoa after a certain age. Charles Kingsley, himself an enthusiastic botanist, and doubtless speaking after expert advice, makes the following remark in "At Last" relative to the existence of the lofty *bois immortel* among mature cocoa trees: "The shade causes excess of moisture, chills, weakens and retards the plants, encourages parasitic moss and insects." The good effects assigned to the *bois immortel* by its adherents are so diverse as to make an inquirer rather sceptical. The generally given reason for planting them is that their shade is beneficial to the cocoa. On my remarking that this tree did not give a good shade owing to the frequency with which it sheds its leaves, I was told that the dead leaves made an excellent mulch for the ground. The dead leaves on the ground, however, will not give shade any more than the living leaves on the tree make mulch. While a third reason for its use was explained by the peculiar property of its roots, which were said to return to the ground in dry weather the excess of moisture previously absorbed, thus furnishing the cocoa with nourishment in times of drought. This last reason was so overwhelming that I did not venture to question



the utility of the *bois immortel* any more (!). As, however, in the whole of the British West Indies, Trinidad easily takes the lead in cocoa, the manner in which these trees are here cultivated must be looked upon with respect, and even now the experiment station of some botanical garden is said to be testing the question by treatment with and without shade.

Up to now we had been travelling over flat country ever since leaving Port-of-Spain, but on approaching the end of our journey where we passed through the only tunnel on the line, we had reached the spurs of the Montserrat Hills, at the foot of which lies the little settlement of Tabaquite. In such places there is often a great difficulty about obtaining a shelter at night, which was even now falling, so, leaving my baggage at the station, I went out in the road to look at the surroundings. Near the railway line there was a good track, on the far side of which were three or four stores at intervals from each other, a few cottages of the poorer class were within sight, and the rest was bush, forest, or whatever else one might choose to call the surrounding foliage. At the nearest and apparently the largest store I inquired if they could give me lodging for the night. It appeared to be a Chinese house, and one of the men answered civilly in English to the effect that the master was away, so they could not receive anyone. I was then told that someone at the railway station might be able to assist me, with the result that I was given permission to sleep in a railway carriage. This, however, looked so dark and dismal by night that I tried elsewhere before accepting its shelter. The second store did not look very inviting, so I went on a few hundred yards to the third one, which was rather a large building. Looking in from the now dark road, I saw a respectable-looking white man talking to someone behind the counter, which emboldened me to ask if I could obtain shelter for the night. He was employed in some superior capacity on the railway extension, and told me that his office was so small that he had barely room to sling his hammock in it, but he asked Mrs. Allen, the owner of the store in which we now were, if she could give me a shelter for the night, and was so successful that a light meal was got ready for me, while a sofa in the sitting-room was put at my disposal for a bed.

The lady of the house was very obliging, although of such Mongolian appearance that, when I went to visit my newly-found friend at his office after supper, I asked if she were not partially of Chinese descent. "Pure Chinese," was the reply.

"But how did she get the name of Allen?"

"By marrying a Chinaman of that name."

"And how did the Chinaman get the name of Allen?"

This was too deep a research into family history; he had either been born in Trinidad or else arrived very young; perhaps his original name had been Ah Ling and thus capable of being anglicized.

Had it not been for the difficulty in obtaining accommodation, it would have been desirable to remain a few days in this place, if only to learn something about the progress of the railway, which, from the vicinity of the hills, is likely to be rather slow.

In the morning Mrs. Allen continued her good offices by supplying me with a negro guide for my rambles. The people and languages



of this district are at least as mixed as elsewhere. Owing to this being still a rather remote place, a few Spanish-speaking people remain, although French *patois*, or creole French, to use the more dignified name generally used in Trinidad, is the usual language. There are also East Indians, while the stores, as in most of the smaller settlements, are chiefly in the hands of the Chinese. My guide was so impressed with the idea that anyone in search of views must wish to be on high ground that he brought me up several steep hills, where the foliage of the bois immortel, cocoa and other trees obscured the view. This exercise had such an effect on my skin and my clothes that I refused to climb any more hills, and told him to bring me to the main road. On our way to it we went through the railway tunnel, an object of local interest which my guide was much surprised that I did not care to photograph. The scenery along the roadside was pretty, through fertile country chiefly under cocoa, but not otherwise remarkable. In the afternoon I returned to Jerningham Junction, where I changed for the main southern line to San Fernando.

The Island now resumed the normal aspect of its western side, a vast level canefield through which the railway passed. As we went southwards, however, the Montserrat Hills drew so much nearer in their diagonal course towards the coast that the bois immortel could be distinguished on them, thus indicating the proximity of the cocoa country. The railway now approached so near the coast that we passed through some mangrove scrub near Claxton Bay, after which we kept inland of the small promontory called Pointe à Pierre before arriving at the junction for Princes Town, only one station from San Fernando, which we reached towards dusk. At a glance it could be seen that this was a stirring little commercial town where there would be no difficulty about obtaining a lodging. As, however, I did not even know the name of any place, I had to take the driver of the buggy into my confidence, with the result that in a few minutes I was brought along a narrow central street to the London Hotel. There is generally a reason for a name if we can only discover it, and my explanation of this one would be that the proprietor, a black soldier who had been to London with some representative part of the West Indian Regiment, had called his hotel by the name of the place which had so favourably impressed him. The house, a two-storied wooden building, compared very favourably in cleanliness with my creole lodging in Port-of-Spain, and the ex-soldier had a decided sense of decorum, always contriving that I never sat down to my meals with black people. On one or two occasions he asked me if I would mind having my meal in my bedroom, which I suppose was a last resource against having a mixture of colours at the same table. On the evening of my arrival, when my only companion at dinner-time was the manager of some distant plantation, our host apologized for the fact that the dining-room had been engaged that night for a dance. The carnival season had, in fact, just begun. This festival, practically non-existent in the English-speaking islands, is enthusiastically kept up by creoles of all colours in this Latinized part of the West Indies, ably assisted by a considerable number of Barbadians and other islanders. The function of to-night was only the precursor of a series of revelries to which the more ardent section of the community would devote itself for the next several days.



The dance gave hopes of an amusing entertainment which promised some resemblance to the now seldom seen "dignity ball." Early in the evening the large dining-room was cleared for action by having the central furniture removed, the musicians arrived soon afterwards, and the proceedings began without waiting for the full number of guests, who dropped in by degrees until their number might have reached from twelve to eighteen couples. It was certainly a representative gathering, as none of the party were white or even light-coloured. In fashionable assemblies it is customary to describe the dresses of the ladies, but it is beyond my power to give more than general impressions. Being carnival time, a certain amount of licence was allowable. Bright red stripes on white washing material were rather popular, and several girls of mature age wore short dresses, extending, however, well below the knee. All, of course, wore high-heeled shoes, which are indispensable on such occasions. My memory has failed to record the style of doing the hair, naturally somewhat limited in the case of black ladies, or particulars of the ornaments or of the powder on their faces, but it may be taken for granted that these were not neglected. The most interesting figures among the females were two young East Indian women who formed a marked contrast to the other guests. Although so far abandoning their customs as to join in European dances, they presented a decidedly Oriental appearance with their long skirts, flowing head-dresses, rings in their noses, and metallic bands on their foreheads. The black women danced with more display of vigour, while the East Indians excelled in grace and seemed to be well appreciated as partners. The black men were dressed neatly for the occasion, the most imposing figure being clad in a very presentable evening suit with some kind of decoration on his coat; perhaps he was the master of the ceremonies. The only one who vied with him in splendour was a little man dressed in white, with a red waistcoat and enormously long tails to his coat; most of the others, however, were content with ordinary dark clothes. All the dances were of the usual European kind, kept up with great vigour, yet in fairness it must be said that they did not degenerate into anything ridiculous or improper, in proof of which the proprietor of the hotel afterwards expressed himself well pleased with the respectable conduct of the people. English was the language used, from which it would appear probable that many of the guests were importations rather than true natives of Trinidad, and the proceedings terminated soon after one in the morning, allowing us to sleep in peace.

In the latter part of that very morning I had to make a long journey, the reason of which will now be explained. Among the many industries in which Trinidad, including its dependency Tobago, has taken the lead in these Islands is that of rubber, which, however, is still in its initial state. Some time previously I had heard that there was a plantation of these trees at Cedros, towards the extremity of that long peninsula stretching nearly forty miles westerly of San Fernando. The journey is easily made by the coasting steamer which plies up and down on alternate days, and this was the day of its departure. I had practically no information about the chances of obtaining shelter at the end of the journey, but by this time I was



beginning to have some confidence in the hospitality of the people, so leaving everything at my new headquarters except a few necessities, of which the camera was the principal, I hurried down to the little pier to catch the steamer *Naparina*. Shortly after our departure from San Fernando I asked the captain if he could tell me anything about the rubber at Cedros, and although he could not enlighten me much personally, he showed me a gentleman on board who was well qualified to do so, being no less than the manager of the plantation. Determined to avail myself of this opportunity, I now introduced myself to Mr. Campbell, who put all my doubts at rest by inviting me to go to the plantation with him.

Owing to the curve of the bay we kept too far from the shore between San Fernando and La Brea to see where the cultivation of sugarcane ceases, but I found afterwards that it extends only for about five miles in this direction, and may be said to come to an end at Mosquito Creek. At La Brea, however, sixteen miles from San Fernando, the attention becomes concentrated on the asphalt from the wonderful Pitch Lake in its vicinity which is shipped from here. Small boulders of asphalt could be seen on the flat shore where the erection of factory buildings has increased the somewhat dismal aspect of the place, which, as one of the wonders of the world and a source of wealth to Trinidad, will be described in a subsequent expedition. On our way between La Brea and Cedros the prevailing cultivation along the coast is that of coco-nuts, although in some places the native forest trees still remain, and after calling at three or four intermediate ports we rounded Cedros Point at the commencement of the estate where I was now going, disembarking in the bay a few miles further on. The steamer, which had already come about forty miles<sup>1</sup> from San Fernando, now went on to the next and last port, Icacos, at the very end of this long peninsula. It could not have been much more than half a mile to the manager's house, and a few words of general information must now be said about this fine property, where I remained nearly two days.

St. Marie estate, the property of Mr. Greig, is about five miles in length, lying between the northern and southern coasts of the peninsula, which at its narrowest part here is not much more than two miles across. The plantation at its eastern extremity towards Cedros Point does not extend as far as the southern coast. At its narrower western end, however, it is bounded by the sea on both sides. I was somewhat disappointed to find that the rubber, which I had come expressly to see, was not the chief industry of the place. Coco-nuts and cocoa were the principal products, the rubber trees having been planted comparatively recently, so that only exploratory tappings had been made, without any commercial return. The manager's house, a fine wooden building raised on high pillars, after the manner of the house at the Cocal, stands on the hilly ground which is rather characteristic of the eastern and upper part of the plantation; these hills, however, are low and undulating, with light soil suitable for the coco-nut palms which grow on them, a large

<sup>1</sup> Hardly thirty in a straight line.



number of the trees being quite young, from five years old upwards and just beginning to bear fruit.

Later in the afternoon I went with Mr. Campbell to the factory, hardly half a mile from the house, where the smaller coco-nuts are broken up to make copra. The manager and a man in charge now went through a list of the hands who had been working. Such a number of names were called out that when the tally was finished I remarked, "You must have called out two hundred names." "More than that," said Mr. Campbell; "there were about two hundred and fifty." The reason for this almost incredible number is easily explained. Many of the employees were coolies who were no longer indentured. They had served their time and were now free labourers, only working when they wished, so that a strict record had to be kept of the number of days that each had been employed. Most of the names, however, were those of East Indians, although some were those of black and coloured people. The following four names will give an idea of the strange mixture in this roll-call: "Ramlal, Babu, Gustave, Edith," thus showing that the coloured and black people had both French and English names, which probably denoted their native language. Close to the factory was the coolie village, beyond which can be seen the fringe of coco-nut palms along the coast where the settlement near the landing-place is situated. Mr. Campbell explained that this village was soon to be evacuated, as being too near the settlement, and that the coolies were going to build at some distance inland; the crowded huts, however, looked so characteristic that I preferred to photograph them rather than the model wooden buildings for the indentured labourers close to the manager's house. The men and boys have discarded the oriental dress, which the women have retained.

On the next morning I went out in a buggy with Mr. Johnson, the assistant manager, who took me several miles through the estate along the Government road, and those smaller tracks here called "traces." The roads for the most part were good for travelling, the light soil being free from stones and not cut up by traffic, while the ground was undulating rather than hilly. Towards the eastern parts of the estate we passed land under "high wood," by which is meant the native timber which had not yet been cleared. In another place I was shown land which was being cultivated by a "contractor." This term is used in a special sense with reference to land in the southern West Indian Islands, and may be taken to mean the person who has made an agreement with the owner to cultivate a small piece of land, generally about five acres in extent, for a term of five years. He is not paid in wages for his work, but is allowed to plant his own crops on the land, and to sell or use the produce grown on it for his own benefit. He must, however, also plant a stipulated number of fruit trees for the owner, who pays him so much for each tree at the expiration of the term when the land is resumed. The price paid is one shilling each, in the case of cocoa, for a full-bearing tree and less in proportion for younger ones. By this means a large estate may be brought under cultivation quickly without great expense, provided the contractor does his work faithfully. We now come to the rubber trees, which were interesting as the growth





81 Main Street in San Fernando, near the Market.



Coolie Village on St. Marie Estate, Cedros.





Rubber (to the left), Coco-nuts (in centre) and Cocoa (to the right) on  
St. Marie Estate.



House of St. Marie Estate.



of a new industry which as yet had brought in no return. The photograph taken illustrates the three principal agricultural products of the estate. To the left are the rubber trees, in the centre some coco-nut palms can be seen in the distance, while to the right of the grassy road is a cocoa plantation where the trees are scarcely shaded by the almost leafless bois immortels, which perhaps are now performing the alternative functions before mentioned. Shortly afterwards we went slightly off the road to see a charming nursery where young cocoa, rubber, and cedar trees were growing. This view would have rivalled the coco-nut nursery at the Cocal only for being spoilt by the sudden movement of the same East Indian girl who is seen in the picture of the rubber. The work of "breaking cocoa" is so similar in all these Islands that the photograph taken here is not reproduced, being practically the same as the one in Grenada, where the men open the pods with their cutlasses, and the women and children take out the cocoa beans. In Grenada, however, all the workers were of the negro race, while here the greater part were coolies whose nationality was rather hard to distinguish among the deep shadows of the trees, especially as some of the females had discarded their flowing headdress for the kerchief of the black women. The headman of this gang of labourers of mixed nationalities was an East Indian.

In the afternoon I went to the residence of Mr. Greig, the owner of the plantation, and will leave the picture to tell its tale of the handsome building, which is worthy of being taken as representative of its kind. Afterwards Mrs. Greig took me out for a drive in a direction where I had not yet been, from the northern side of the peninsula to its southern coast, about two miles and a half along the St. Marie road. Almost the whole way was a continuous plantation of coco-nut palms, this western part of the estate being probably best adapted for the agriculture, owing to its proximity to the sea on both sides. On approaching the sandy shore we drove through a grove of fine mature trees, reminding me of the beach-combers of the Cocal and probably owing their origin to the same cause. The sea here, while not having quite the same force as that of the open Atlantic on the eastern coast, is considerably rougher than the smooth waters of the Gulf of Paria, whose southern limit is bounded by the straits of the so-called Serpent's Mouth which we were now facing, having the shore of Venezuela and the mouths of the Orinoco only a few miles in front of us. We now walked a few hundred yards to the side of the road to see an industry which few would expect to find so near what might be called the Land's End. There had, apparently, been indications that mineral oil might be found here, and the owner of the property had granted a concession to a company which had already bored deeply into the ground. The work was going on when we arrived, but no oil had yet been tapped, and I was sorry to see in a subsequent report that this company had discontinued operations, as a more favourable result would probably have been beneficial to St. Marie Estate which had treated me so hospitably. This important industry of the oil-fields, still in its initial stage, has been started in several places in Trinidad, and will be mentioned again in connection with the Pitch Lake.



On returning to the manager's house late in the afternoon I watched a game of tennis, and then strolled a few yards away to look at the fine cattle near the pond made for their use. The zebu bull, however, showed signs of bad temper at seeing a stranger by tossing his head at me several times, so that I was somewhat relieved when a little coolie boy, evidently accustomed to tend these cattle, made the animal retreat by pelting him with earth. In the evening we were invited to the owner's house, where, after a pleasant visit, I said good-bye before returning by steamer to San Fernando on the following morning.

I now spent a few days in this little town, which was very lively in the carnival season. At first there was some trouble about finding a place to develop my photographs. Eventually, however, I arranged with one of the local photographers, an intelligent young East Indian, who allowed me the use of his dark room at a very moderate price. This young man showed in a marked degree the capabilities of his race when transplanted into a new country, and freed from the restrictions of caste. He told me the history of the migration of his family to Trinidad. Their rice harvest had been ruined by floods, after which they went to Calcutta in a rather despondent state, and finding that a number of their countrymen were leaving for this Island as indentured labourers, they availed themselves of the opportunity. Either born in Trinidad or arriving as a little child, he had quite adopted European civilization, being far from proficient in the language of his forefathers, and evidently of opinion that he had made a change for the better in escaping from the barriers to advancement caused by the customs of his ancestral country, where, to use his own expression, "if you are down, they keep you down." He had certainly a right to speak thus, for whereas in India he would have been a poor peasant, he was now a prosperous photographer—a calling which, while entailing plenty of work, was a great improvement on his family's former social position. The fact that he employed a coloured servant goes far towards proving the statement of an estate manager—"If it were not for the new arrivals of indentured labourers the black people would soon be all working for the East Indians."

My next excursion was to the Pitch Lake. Starting as before by the steamer, I disembarked in a boat at La Brea, instead of going on to Brighton pier, about one mile farther on. My reason for choosing the less popular port was that a gentleman on whom I depended for finding me a guide lived near here. On arriving at the house I was hospitably invited to breakfast, and was then provided with a negro servant to show me the way to the lake, which lies within a mile of the shore, although appearing rather farther by my circuitous journey. There are few places in the West Indies less attractive than this locality, and the epithet "dismal" applied to it on my way to Cedros will again answer the purpose. The so-called "pitch" is in reality a huge reservoir of asphalt, some boulders of which are seen on the very edge of the seashore, where the plainness of the scenery is increased by the factory buildings. The country through which we passed on our way to the lake was unfertile-looking without being absolutely barren, asphalt predominating in some places, and coarse,



sandy soil in others, affording a sparse vegetation in patches. After an ascent so gradual as hardly to be noticeable, we reached the well-defined margin of the lake, where practically all plant life comes to an end. A slight circular dip in the ground is now seen which may be compared to a shallow lake whose water has been evaporated, leaving its bed of dry, dark-coloured mud exposed to view. The size of this peculiar area gives the impression of being about a mile across, while the extent of the so-called Pitch Lake, which has been leased to an American company, is given as only about one hundred acres, a discrepancy which can be only taken to mean that the official lake forms only a small part of the entire depression, which contains asphalt in a more or less pure state to its very edge.

We now made the slight descent to the lake-like surface on our way to Stollmeyer's concession, a smaller one than that owned by the American company. On walking upon this asphalt for the first time there is a natural apprehension about sinking; the consistence, however, is very similar to that of asphalt roads in England, whose material in some cases has been brought from this very place. Very few men were working on the day of my first visit, owing to the carnival, which had its votaries even in this far-off place. There were, perhaps, some half-a-dozen negroes who were breaking the surface asphalt with picks and loading a few trucks which stood on a tram-line laid on the solid surface of the lake. The subject was an unusually hard one to photograph, not merely on account of its severe plainness, but because of the prevailing dark colour which affords no contrast, and the result was so disappointing that I returned two days afterwards for the purpose of making a second attempt, which is here reproduced. On this second occasion I was brought to the American concession. Here the trucks can be seen on the tram-line over the lake. They are not, however, drawn by mules, as in the other company, but by a cable which drags them to the building seen in the left of the background, where I was told that the asphalt was melted down so as to be more easily exported in barrels. Wherever the hard asphalt on the top is removed, the softer strata underneath are gradually pushed up, so that in a very few days the holes are filled and no sign of excavation remains except perhaps a slight inequality on the surface. The little water-channel in the foreground is very characteristic, there being many such in different parts of the lake, between the fissures on its surface. Tussocks of coarse grass also appear in many places on the water's edge, and there are even some small islands of vegetation wherever there is enough soil mixed with the asphalt to support plant life.

My guide of the first day gave me some very misleading information by telling me that small alligators, about four or five feet long, lived on the lake, but hid themselves in these islands during the day time. It seemed so incomprehensible that alligators should make their abode where there was not sufficient water to shelter them, that I asked my informant what food they ate, and when he told me that they lived on flies it was evident that the so-called alligators were iguanas.

The men employed in breaking off the asphalt and in loading the trucks were all negroes, many of them probably Barbadians, as English



seemed to be their native language. So many East Indians are employed in the larger industries of Trinidad that a few words should be said in explanation of the reason why negro labour is preferred in certain cases. The coolie, from the very fact of his binding agreement, as well as from his natural disposition, is a more suitable source of labour for that large amount of plantation work which from its very nature is continuous without involving strenuous muscular exertion. The negro, on the other hand, while not so reliable for continuous work as the coolie, is a man of stronger physique, with less capability and ambition for advancement in the social scale; he is therefore quite willing to tax his powers to the utmost for a shorter period in order that he may have money to spend during his greater intervals of leisure. These are the general characteristics of these two types of labour, to which, of course, there are numerous exceptions. Thus the negro is to the fore in any arduous and highly paid manual labour, such as with the pick and shovel, or in the lifting and carrying of heavy loads, somewhat after the manner of the white man who does heavy contract work in the colonies for the sake of making a "good cheque," which he too often squanders.

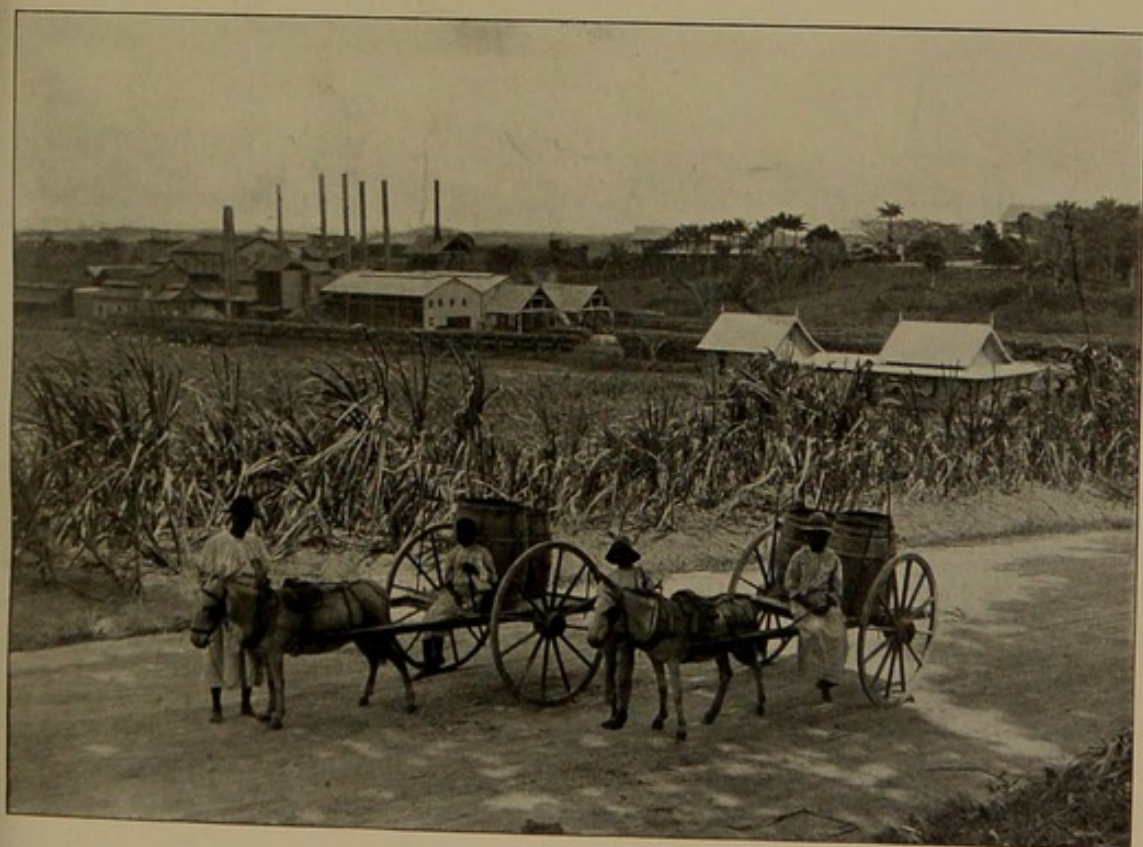
The Pitch Lake may indeed be said to be a mine of wealth for Trinidad, having brought the Government a revenue of about £40,000 during the year preceding my visit; and from this locality mineral oil has also been shipped lately on a large scale. At the very edge of the lake the pipes could be seen through which the oil was being conveyed on the surface of the ground to the large shed containing the tank for its reception. The best-known oil concession is at Guayaguayare; so many indications, however, have been found in other parts that until this new industry has been further developed it would be difficult to define the best oil-bearing district.

I returned from La Brea to San Fernando in two hours by the motor-bus, the drive of sixteen miles costing the moderate charge of two shillings and sixpence. These buses are another sign of prosperity, proving that there are a number of people who, without being very rich, are not without means, for in most of the other Islands there would only be a choice between hiring a buggy and walking. And who was the enterprising owner of this conveyance used by people of all colours, from white to black? The name inscribed on it was so Oriental that I do not venture to write it from memory, being evidently that of one of those intelligent East Indians who have raised themselves to the position of those small capitalists so much needed in the West Indies and so scantily supplied by Europeans. We did not come out on the sea front until nearly half the journey had been done, after travelling at a very fair speed along a good but hilly road. In many places the country was planted with patches of coco-nuts and cocoa, having, however, a considerable amount of uncultivated ground between them. Just after reaching the coast we passed over the mouth of the Oropuche Lagoon. This so-called lagoon is in reality a considerable extent of swampy country drained by the Godineau River, a tidal creek like the Nariva, only smaller. At the place where the river empties itself into the sea there is a good iron bridge, from which the channel surrounded by mangrove scrub can be seen for a long way up. From here to





The Pitch Lake—loading the Trucks with Asphalt.



St. Madeleine's, the largest central Cane-crushing Factory (Usine) in Trinidad.







Mosquito Creek, two miles further, the road follows the coast, being only slightly raised above the swamp through which it runs, and Mosquito Creek is the eastern limit of this low-lying mangrove country, beyond which sugarcane is grown for the last five miles to San Fernando.

For a few days the town of San Fernando now assumed quite an abnormal appearance during the carnival, of which I saw something during the intervals between my excursions. It was, indeed, rather wonderful that so thoroughly a European festival should have taken such a hold on the coloured and black people of this West Indian Island, evidently from the opportunity it offered for a certain amount of licence. Not that there appeared to be anything which could be called disorderly conduct, and no one showed any signs of intoxication among the groups of men and women who paraded the streets dressed in fantastic costumes. Many wore masks, the favourite dress for the males being an imitation of the French Pierrot. These masqueraders never interfered with other people, but kept their proceedings strictly among themselves. The East Indians took no direct part in this amusement, although several were present as spectators. I saw, however, one instance of an attempt at an Oriental entertainment more suited to their traditions. On an unoccupied piece of ground at the side of the road a few coolies were assembled to watch one of their number who was engaged in a somewhat weird performance. This man, naked to the loin-cloth, had a small drum over his shoulder, and each time that he beat the instrument he crouched in one of those peculiar attitudes which we are accustomed to see in Oriental pictures or sculpture, such as bending the body forward and spreading the arms and hands in forced positions. In the afternoon many people of the better class drove at a walking pace through the principal streets, merely watching the carnival, without joining in any festivities, either with those on foot or in other buggies. A very few of these carriages contained white people, most being coloured or black, or even East Indians, the latter being often accompanied by their well-dressed families, the females of which were resplendent in Oriental shawls and jewellery. We are so accustomed to think that the capital should contain the best of everything that it was rather surprising to find that the East Indians of San Fernando were superior as a class to those of Port-of-Spain, and were generally of a lighter colour. The explanation given me was that a greater proportion of the coolies in the capital came from Madras, while those in the smaller town came from Calcutta.

My last expedition from the headquarters of San Fernando was to the rising little settlement called Princes Town, about seven miles inland, taking on my way the central cane-crushing factory or usine called St. Madeleine's, the largest in the Island. This journey can be made on the Government railway by returning to the junction one station northwards, and then changing for the Princes Town branch; the most direct way, however, is by a little train, commonly called the "Pick-up," which connects the two towns in a comparatively straight line, with the further advantage of passing near the usine. In order to give myself time to photograph this factory on the way, I started



on foot some time before the "Pick-up" left San Fernando, intending to avail myself of the little train for the latter part of the journey. It was a walk of about three miles through that cultivation of cane which extends the whole way to Princes Town. The people of Trinidad are justly proud of their fine usine, with its seven chimneys, which, however, is not so well adapted for a photograph as many a smaller factory, from the difficulty in obtaining a suitable position, which thus obliged me to go rather too far away. In buying cane from the producer who has not efficient machinery for making high-grade sugar, these central factories have been invaluable to small farmers, who would otherwise be obliged to manufacture an inferior article in a wasteful manner instead of receiving a ready return from their crop. St. Madeleine's is fed by many miles of light railway, which brings the cane from the surrounding district in trucks, such as are seen in the long line beside the factory. The water-carts on the road in front of the canefield suggest that Trinidad is not so well supplied with water as some of the more mountainous islands. Close to the factory, however, is a lake which appears to be used as a reservoir, from the number of carts with barrels going to and from it.

I now returned, not to a railway station, which indeed the "Pick-up" does not possess, but to the nearest stopping-place of the train in which I now continued my way to Princes Town. This little conveyance is a very primitive affair, a sort of rough steam tramcar, much used by the people of the district, who prefer to pay their few pence rather than walk. Just before reaching the end of the journey we passed a cane factory which would have made a better picture than the usine, for while its name, "Mal-de-Tous," did not sound very promising, a small hill at close quarters gave an advantage which the other building did not possess.

Princes Town is one of those thriving little townships which indicate the expansion of settlement, and so must be treated with due respect. It presents, however, very much the appearance of other places so often seen on the frontier of Anglo-Saxon civilization in tropical countries, a number of severely plain wooden houses, sufficient indeed for commercial purposes, but leaving much to be desired. The "Pick-up" had deposited me in the centre of the mercantile area, where I now looked about for some refreshment. Restaurants are rare in the West Indies, except in the principal towns, but it is generally possible to obtain something of a simple kind, which on this occasion consisted of that nice aerated drink called kola, together with buns from a stall at the entrance of the same shop. I now rambled through the only business street in the little town, more out of curiosity than in the hope of obtaining any photograph worth having. On passing a central store of considerable size, my attention was attracted by a gramophone, not from fondness of such music, which has now become so common in these parts as to be rather repellent, but owing to the peculiar record played on it. Its Oriental character was so pronounced that at first I thought it was some of that music of a Moorish character which has become naturalized in the south of Spain, but after listening a short time I decided that it was not Spanish, and noticing that most of the people in front of the store were East Indians, I entered



to ask if this record was an Indian one. Such indeed was the case. The store belonged to Mr. Ramcharan, a prominent merchant, whose assistants were of his own nationality. I was now asked to sit down, and other records were played, none, however, so interesting as the Indian one. The Oriental appearance of this store was heightened by the people who congregated under the shelter of the large portico in front, where a blind musician was playing on a one-stringed archaic instrument, the music of which was much appreciated by his countrymen. East Indian store-keepers have succeeded so well, owing in great measure to the number of their fellow-countrymen who deal with them, that in most of the secondary towns, not even excepting San Fernando, they take the lead of the Chinese, who as a rule devote their attentions to the smaller settlements.

If Princes Town itself had not furnished me with views my visit had by no means been made in vain. I had been hospitably entertained in an East Indian store and obtained here one of my best Oriental types, the little girl whose likeness appears in the next chapter. The "Pick-up" train had already started, so I now returned to San Fernando by the more circuitous course of the Government railway, which, however, travels faster. Here also the country, more undulating than along the flat western coast, was under the cultivation of sugarcane.

On two occasions I went to the little theatre close to my hotel. The first performance consisted of moving pictures, very good of their kind, but so badly appreciated that the building was nearly empty. The second time, however, the place was crowded to see a caricature of negro-life, such as often emanates from the United States. Although the jokes were of a kind which might well make a person feel sad, they were intensely appreciated by the audience. One of them will serve for an example. A negro is offered a high rate of wages per day, whereupon he becomes extremely suspicious and refuses the offer because "per" means "per-haps you pay me and per-haps you don't." As most of the audience were coloured and black themselves, I thought they would have resented the caricature, while on the contrary they were very much amused by it, thinking, I suppose, like the coffee-stall keeper in Jamaica, "I'm a different kind of a nigger."

San Fernando, without having pretentious buildings, is distinctly above the ordinary type of country settlement in the West Indies and may well deserve the name of the southern capital. The number of its inhabitants, some eight thousand, places it on a par with Spanish Town, the second largest town in Jamaica, but in other respects San Fernando is far superior, being distinguished by its commercial appearance from a place which became prominent merely through being the residence of officials and had decayed after their removal. It has also an advantage in its greater distance from the capital and in being a coast town, so that it may aspire to export its produce directly. One great drawback to the otherwise pleasant life on this western coast is the absence of good sea-bathing. The muddy waters of the Gulf of Paria, for which the Orinoco is again responsible, are not enticing. So near, indeed, is the mainland that whenever I lost my bearings in the south-western part of the Island I was inclined to think that the Venezuelan mountains, so clearly visible, were in Trinidad.



There were difficulties in the way of seeing a curious phenomenon near the southern coast, about which a few words must be said. Some months previously the inhabitants of that part had been frightened by seeing fire and smoke and by hearing loud reports, like those of a cannon, a short distance out at sea. A small volcanic island, described as from one to two acres in extent, had in fact been thrown up about two miles from the shore. At first none would go there; eventually, however, a party headed by a courageous sergeant went out in a boat and landed on the newly-risen ground, which was still so soft that the only way of standing on it was to place planks under their feet. By degrees the fears of the people became somewhat less and others visited the place. A photograph taken at some distance away represented the island as a shoal of mud above the sea, and the Indian photographer at San Fernando had taken an excellent likeness of the miniature crater by seemingly placing the camera at the very edge of it. He informed me, however, that when he arrived at the coast a second time for the purpose of making another visit, no one would take him in a boat, so he was obliged to return after a fruitless journey, and I was apprehensive about sharing the same fate.

Before returning to Port-of-Spain I now visited Siparia, a little settlement not many miles from the southern coast, where a person lived to whom I had a letter of introduction. The readiness with which a stranger is given these introductions and is, so to say, passed on from one person to another, is a very pleasing feature in Trinidad.



## CHAPTER XXVII.

## IN TRINIDAD.

MY journey to Siparia, like that from the Pitch Lake, was made in the motor-bus of another enterprising East Indian, as the railway extension which now connects this settlement with San Fernando had not yet been completed. Canefields lined the road until we reached a halfway village, called by the prosaic name of John Thomas, beyond which the cultivation of cocoa begins and extends in great measure for the rest of the way, with patches of unreclaimed forest land between. On nearing Siparia the ground becomes rather hilly without being broken or rocky, so that it is seemingly capable of cultivation in most places. The little township, which in older countries would only be called a village, is not so pretentious as Princes Town, being in fact so primitive that the embryo streets, almost always severely plain in these frontier settlements, are immediately surrounded by the country, the scenery of which is a fair sample of the land in so many parts of the interior of Trinidad, neither exciting admiration by its beauty nor repellent through the want of it—such, in fact, as might be expected from cocoa plantations with patches of forest or “high woods” between them. The settlement had been brought into prominence about twenty years previously by an event of an unusual nature. An image of the Virgin had been discovered in the neighbouring woods by a party of people who accompanied the priest. For some time it was allowed to remain where found in the hope of some sign for the guidance of the devout, but after the image had been visited on subsequent occasions without further manifestation than changes of posture, it was removed to the church in Siparia, which has become in consequence the object of many a pilgrimage.

On the arrival of the motor-bus, I presented my letter of introduction to Mr. Fitzwilliam, who used his good offices in obtaining a lodging for me in one of the principal stores, there being no hotel in the settlement, and he further promised to take me out for a drive on the following day. Early in the same afternoon I arranged with a negro guide to walk with me to Siparia Estate, about two miles distant, where I hoped to obtain a few good East Indian types among the many indentured labourers employed. When we reached this large cocoa plantation, I went first to the house of the manager, from whom I asked and obtained leave to go to the quarters or barracks of the coolies, situated several hundred yards away. The neat little hospital where a few East Indians were being treated lies on the top of an isolated piece of rising ground, and separated from it by a small



ravine were the rows of substantial huts which formed the barracks, now in a somewhat deserted state owing to their inmates being engaged at their field duties.

I soon found that any attempt at attaining my object with no further assistance than that of a somewhat inert negro was doomed to failure, for even when the field workers returned it was impossible to make any satisfactory arrangement. The coolie when met on the road, or in the field, is generally a very civil fellow, but a gang of them become rather obstreperous when confronted by a stranger who wants them to do something to which they are not accustomed. Even when they understood what I wanted, some of the best types were not willing to be photographed, or only if they received the exorbitant payment of two dollars. Others, apparently knowing no English, addressed me in their own language, until, tired of a Babel of voices in an unknown tongue, I gave up all hope and went away, although there were excellent types among them. The remark of my guide was characteristic, "You see these people are not civilized." Such is the attitude of the negro, who is well aware that the East Indian immigrant is outpacing him in the race of life, and is so jealous of the fact that he is fond of assuming a superiority on account of his recently adopted European civilization. Two East Indians had already informed me of the jealousy of negroes in this respect, and in Siparia itself I had a confirmation of their statement in the words of a coloured man who voiced the grievances of his countrymen in these terms, "You may do what you like to a creole, but you mustn't touch an East Indian."

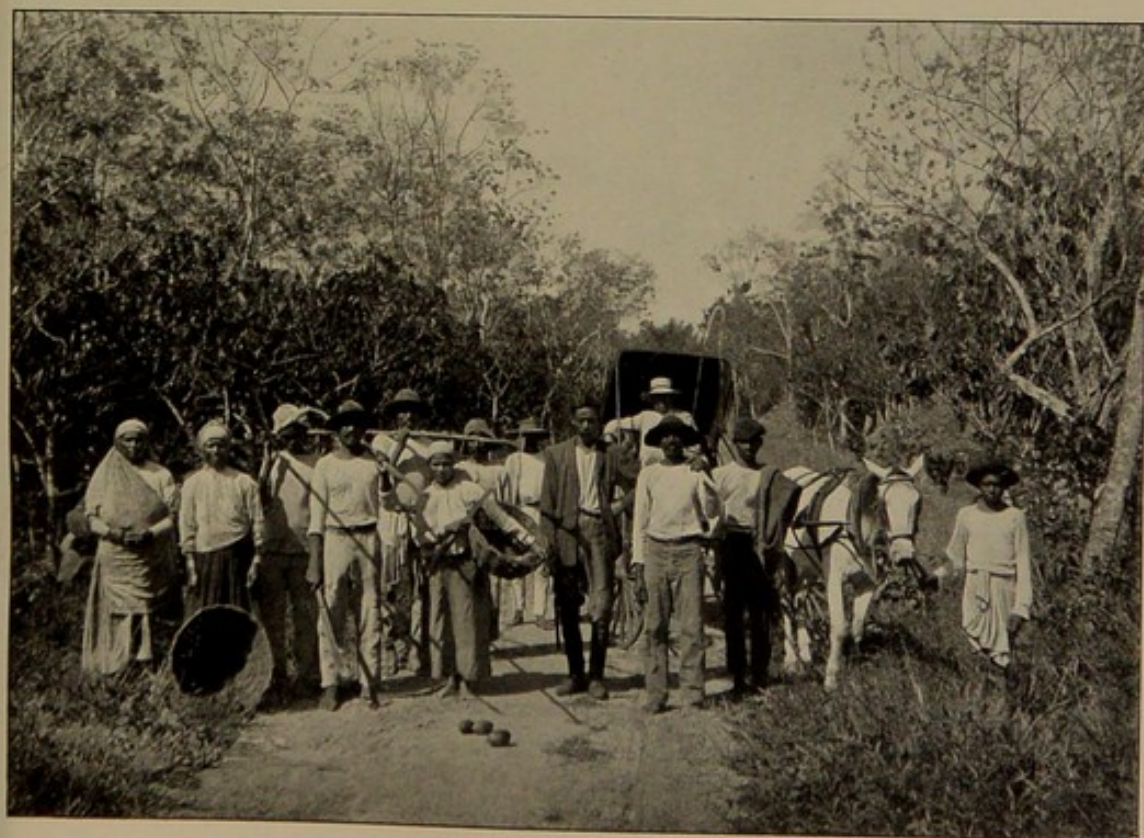
Owing to the hospitality of planters and managers I had already spent several nights in the country; this, however, was the first time I had lodged in a little country settlement where the customs of the place may be exemplified by the procedure of the store in which I was lodging. Instead of closing early in the evening, as is usual in larger towns, the store was kept open almost until bed-time, while the inmates for the most part sat down in the verandah at its entrance. Occasionally someone might enter to make a purchase, so seldom, however, at this advanced hour that the reason for the habit was evidently social rather than mercantile. "*Salām*," "*Salud caballero*," "*Bonsoi*," "Good-night." Such were the salutations given to the passers-by in wonderfully mixed languages to suit the person addressed. The *caballero* in question would have been more appropriately addressed as *burrero* (donkey-man), as he was riding a donkey. Siparia being still a rather remote place, a few Spanish-speaking people may yet be found in it. Most of these so-called Spaniards are not of pure white race, but although a certain amount of negro blood is mixed with their white ancestry, they keep their language in a fairly grammatical state, which never degenerates into a form like the French *patois*, or creole French as its adherents prefer to call it. As before remarked, these Spanish-speaking people gradually disappear when a district becomes opened out, and their number here is said to be now considerably less than it was even in recent years.

On the following morning I was taken out for a drive by Mr. Fitzwilliam, who was well acquainted with the district, and had the contract of keeping in repair various roads which led to several newly





Siparia.



Cocoa Estate, bought by an East Indian for forty thousand dollars.





Government Forest Reserve.  
Negro hunter and his dogs in foreground.



granted oil concessions. The general character of the country was the same as that described in the latter part of the journey to Siparia—low sloping hills partly under the cultivation of cocoa. After travelling a few miles we had what may be called an adventure. While driving along the road, which ran through a cocoa plantation, we met a party of East Indians who were evidently gathering the pods. This gave promise of a thoroughly representative scene, and, as they made no objection, I photographed the whole group. The sparse foliage of the bois immortel may here also be seen, towering above the cocoa trees on each side of the road. It should always be the custom of a landscape photographer to give a small gratuity to any poor people who figure prominently in the foreground, so before we drove away I offered two shillings to the woman at the extreme left, who seemed to be a person of some authority and from whom, indeed, my companion had asked permission to take the photograph. She made a gesture of dissent, whereupon I said, "If you don't want it yourself, keep it for the others." On this understanding she took the money, which would only amount to about twopence each. We had scarcely gone out of hearing when Mr. Fitzwilliam made the following observation, "That is Mrs. Rudal, the widow of a rich East Indian; about fifteen months ago she bought this estate for forty thousand dollars!" So the woman who had been taken for one of the leading workers had lately bought this estate for about £8,000 and had probably other property besides. Well, I had made a mistake in offering her the money, but I am sure so business-like a lady will forgive me. No one could have suspected that this plainly dressed person engaged in plantation work was either an employer of labour or the owner of the estate, although she certainly did look superior to her fellow-workers. It will be noticed that there is something dignified about her appearance, besides which she has many bangles on her arms and wears the Oriental head-dress, which the other two women have discarded for the kerchief of the negress.

About two miles further on Mr. Fitzwilliam drew my attention to the ground at the side of the road, and put into my hands a large greasy clod which I thought contained asphalt; it was, however, earth saturated with mineral oil. If only a small number of these newly-granted concessions turn out well, the effect on the prosperity of Trinidad will be very marked. We had now arrived at a large forest reserve which is worthy of taking its place among representative views if only to give a good idea of the native timber. The hand of man is so surely transforming the work of Nature in the larger West Indian Islands that few places suitable for agriculture remain clothed in their native foliage, generally more beautiful than the crop which has taken its place, and this is one of the reasons why the wilder parts appear more picturesque, it does not pay to cultivate them. To this rule the graceful coco-nut palms and plantains are perhaps exceptions, while sugarcane is one of the chief offenders. In the foreground of this photograph there is a negro hunter with his dogs, while among the trees to the right of the road are seen two of those frail leafy shelters called "joupas"<sup>1</sup> in the French-speaking islands.

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<sup>1</sup> A joupa is sometimes written "ajoupa" from the addition of the article.

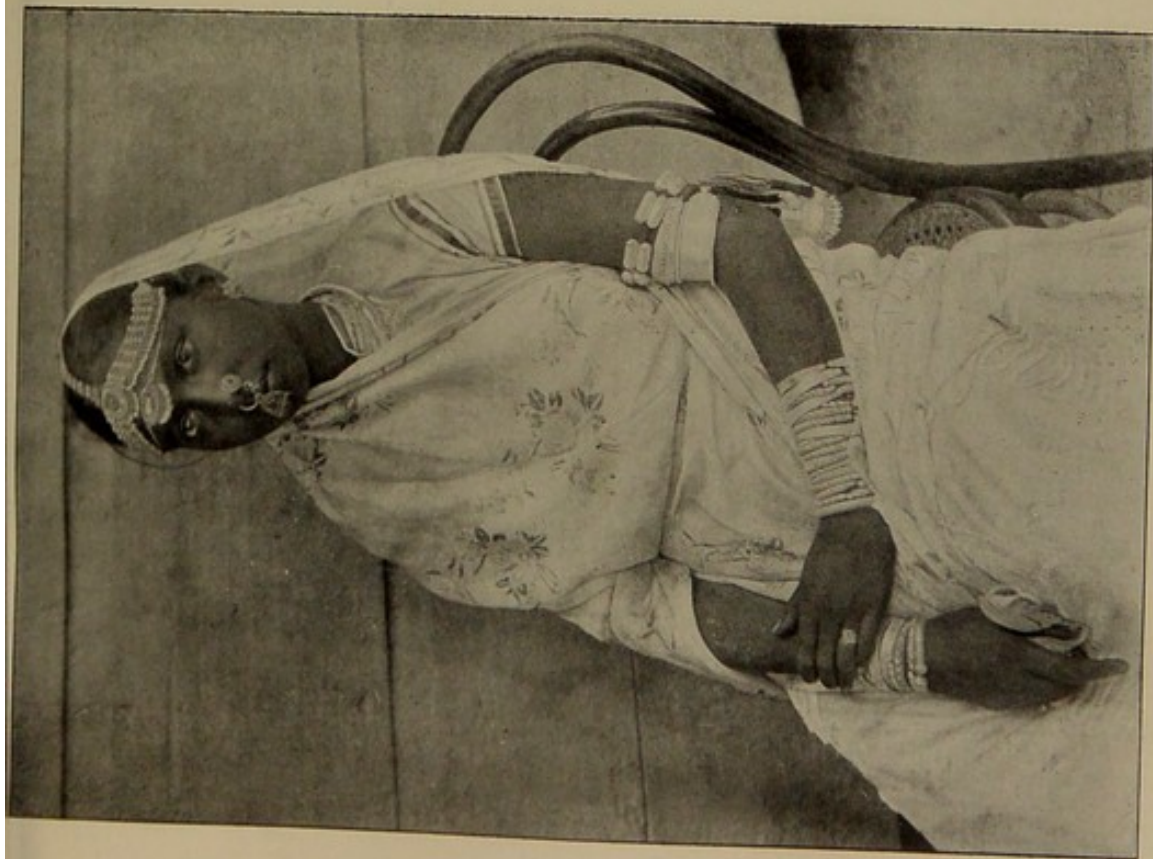


On our way back we passed through a small settlement called Fyzabad, a name which clearly denotes the origin of many of its inhabitants. While waiting in the buggy until Mr. Fitzwilliam had transacted some business here, I was interested in watching the school-children as they passed, and a more mixed lot I never saw. Some were coloured in all shades from nearly white to nearly black, many were East Indians, some were even Chinese, to say nothing of other combinations of these different strains. A few of the best mannered ones spoke to me as they passed. Most of these were East Indians, by race if not by birth; while, however, there was no foreign accent in their nicely pronounced salutation, "Good morning, sir," there was something decidedly foreign in their manner, a kind of retiring diffidence not often found in these democratic days, even among negro children, who readily assimilate English manners. The schoolmaster plays an important part in every country—in none, however, to such an extent as in a place like Trinidad, where most of the parents of the children do not speak English as their native language. Thus the medium in which the lessons are taught becomes in the truest sense the mother tongue, and the Hindustani, French, Spanish and Chinese of the parents fall gradually into disuse, with the result that the rising generation is welded together with one language common to all. This may partly account for the disappearance of the Spanish-speaking people, who, being few in number, are the first to be effaced; they do not die out and cannot always retire before the expansion of a settlement—they are absorbed.

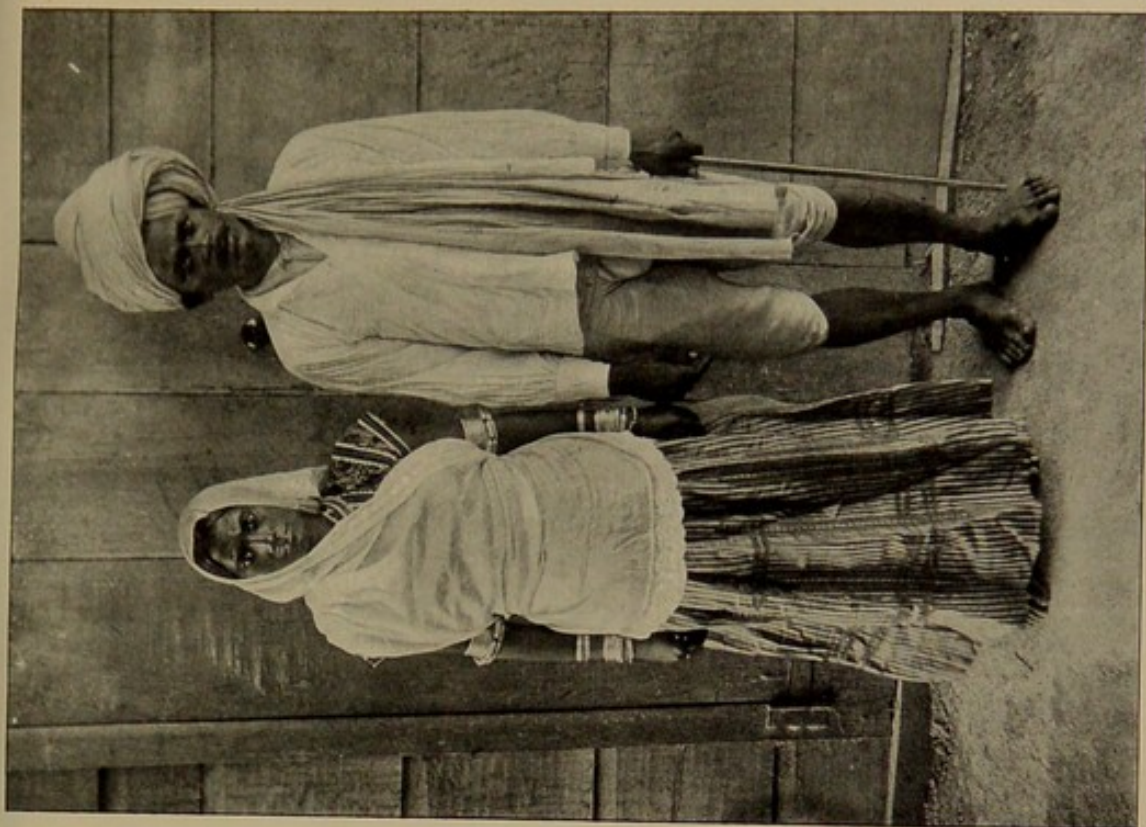
After the drive I had another proof of hospitality. The people on a neighbouring estate had heard of my failure in obtaining East Indian types and now invited me to choose some among their own labourers at Alta Gracia, another cocoa estate within a mile of the settlement; as, however, the day was now advanced, it was arranged that I should visit them on the following afternoon. The next morning, just before going out, a further proof of hospitality rather embarrassed me. Mr. Asbert, the book-keeper on Siparia Estate, where I had made the fruitless journey, had come to make a similar offer of assistance. It was impossible to do justice to both offers at almost the same time, and on the next day I was going to return to San Fernando; so I was obliged to tell Mr. Asbert of my prior engagement, but arranged to visit Siparia Estate on the following morning, just before my departure. I now visited Alta Gracia, where Mr. R. de Gannes gave me every facility for my work, and invited me to remain for dinner. Out of my four remaining photographic plates, however, I only exposed two here, as there was a greater selection of East Indians on the larger Estate, if only they would allow themselves to be taken. On the following morning I re-visited the coolies' quarters on Siparia Estate, but this time under very different circumstances, as my companion, Mr. Asbert, was known to be a man in authority, and he could also speak Hindustani. Through his aid I succeeded in obtaining two really good types, after which I was obliged to hurry back to the settlement, arriving just in time to catch the motor-bus for San Fernando.

A day afterwards I returned to Port-of-Spain, when, as already mentioned, I made my second visit to the Maracas River, which I had





East Indian Type at Port-of-Spain.



East Indians on Siparia Estate.





Hasra, a little East Indian Girl of Princes Town.



neglected on the former occasion. On the very morning of my departure for Barbados I was fortunate enough to obtain a good East Indian type, and will now relate the circumstances under which I took my four representative pictures of these people, placing the likenesses together for purposes of comparison.

Shortly before changing my headquarters from Port-of-Spain to San Fernando I had gone in the electric cars to the suburb called St. James, popularly known as Coolie Town, owing to the great number of East Indians residing there. While, however, the environment was as Oriental as could be desired, it was not so easy to obtain a good type, as the East Indian is not so fond of being photographed as the negro. Having had occasion to ask a black woman some question about the way, I offered to pay her if she would help me, whereupon she said to her companion, "We will take him to the woman who lives at the jeweller's." After following them several hundred yards we came to a wooden house of a rather superior kind, where I explained the object of my visit to a man who spoke English perfectly, and in a short time a good-looking East Indian woman appeared who promised to come with her husband to the house where I was residing on the condition of being paid one dollar for having her photograph taken. They never came, however, so I left for San Fernando without having had time to make further inquiries about them. On the morning of my departure from the Island I returned with the camera to Coolie Town on the chance of being able to take the photograph on the spot. It appears that they had not wilfully disappointed me, but some unexpected difficulty had prevented them from keeping their engagement. The photograph was now taken under such unfavourable circumstances that it is a wonder it was not a complete failure. The only shade from the glaring tropical sun was at the side of a wooden house, which, having no verandah, admitted all the "top light," while the constant wind made the flowing Oriental headdress flutter the whole time. Under favourable circumstances, however, the result would have been better, as she was a superb type, evidently not belonging to the lowest class. It was interesting to notice the way in which these East Indians pick out the weak points in their fellow-countrymen's religions. The devout Mahommedan buggy-driver had spoken contemptuously of "idolators," evidently applying this term to the Hindus, and now, while waiting until the young woman was ready to be photographed, the same man with whom I had spoken on the former occasion remarked with reference to Mahommedanism, "Now that's what I call a persecuting religion; if you don't believe in what they do they want to crucify you."

The photograph of the man and the woman together is that of two indentured labourers on Siparia Estate. They are a fine-looking couple and the woman had such bright eyes that they reminded me of those of a snake. If some people consider this a doubtful compliment, those who have lived in countries where snakes are frequently seen in a state of nature will bear witness to the brightness of their eyes. Indeed it seemed as if there was a little of the disposition of the serpent in her temperament, for just before her likeness was taken one of the coolies who were watching the performance made some



remark which displeased her, whereupon she walked away in a temper and was only brought back through the persuasion of her husband. Of course they do not go to their field work dressed in such an elaborate costume, which is evidently used only on great occasions.

The last photograph is that of a little girl whom I saw in front of the East Indian store in Princes Town. Her face and posture are intensely Oriental and she shows so much character that it is difficult to realize that she is hardly ten years of age. By some she might not be called good-looking, but there is no doubt about her having what may be called a "picture face," if only on account of her large expressive eyes. The faces of these four types will compare favourably with that of the average European, and on looking at them one can readily understand the intellectual superiority of their race to that of the negro, who is ages behind them in civilization.

The preceding chapters will have been written in vain if the reader has not noticed that the experiences in Trinidad have been considerably affected by the hospitality of the people and the industrial environment into which this very hospitality admits a stranger. No reflection is hereby made on the inhabitants of the other islands, still those who have proved themselves in this respect must be given the place of honour, rather than those who might have done so under similar conditions. One is irresistibly drawn to make comparisons in this respect between Jamaica and Trinidad, as being the two largest of the British islands and at the opposite ends of the West Indies. In the former it would not be correct for a traveller to expect hospitality on an estate, because there would probably be an hotel, or at least a boarding-house, within a few miles' distance, while in the latter the want of such accommodation may serve as a valid excuse.

The luxurious hotels in Jamaica have also tended to create an artificial surrounding under the foregone conclusion that the stranger must be a rich tourist, while in Trinidad the stranger shares the home life of his host. Thus the traveller will see these two islands from different points of view, immeasurably to the advantage of the latter. In the former case you will be more likely to be shown "objects of interest" by a guide or an hotel employee, who may perhaps be able to retail the interesting but mythical stories attached to them; in the latter case you accompany your host to the scene of his everyday life, the plantation.

Some have asserted that Trinidad is the most beautiful of the West Indian Islands. In my opinion it is not entitled to such a claim and it is unfair to such a prepossessing country to give rise to expectations which cannot be substantiated. Certain parts, indeed, especially near the great northern range where streams like the Maracas River have their source, will probably rival anything in the West Indies, but they do not represent the greater part of the Island, which is flat rather than mountainous. Trinidad may well be content with being the first in prosperity and may leave Jamaica, Grenada, and Dominica to compete for the palm of beauty.

With these premises an attempt will now be made to enumerate the causes of the Island's prosperity, some of which can only be



discussed in a tentative way, for while many are undoubtedly due to human or to natural agency, others are of a mixed nature. We will begin by what the inhabitants of Trinidad have undoubtedly done to further their own welfare. Foremost in this class must be placed the large East Indian immigration which so many have mentioned with approval that opinion on this subject seems fairly unanimous. These immigrants have been introduced into many of the West Indian Islands; in none, however, to anything like the same extent as in Trinidad. The manner in which these people fulfil the requirements of tropical agriculture has already been stated and need not be repeated at length. It is not claimed that they work as hard as negroes in those cases where shorter periods of strenuous muscular exertion are required, but they work in a more continuous and reliable manner.

While, however, everyone allows that, as agricultural labourers, the East Indians have been a potent factor in the prosperity of Trinidad, few seem to draw attention to the equally important result of their residence in the Island after their term of indenture has passed. However wisely the planters and the Government may have acted by the introduction of this supply of labour, it is probable that they never realized that they were importing a population which was capable of eventually forming that middle class which is so scantily represented. It has already been shown that there is a decided tendency in the British West Indies generally to make the white stranger, who is presumably not wealthy, such as the second-class passenger, feel that he is not welcome. Some of the leading people appear to prefer the old order of things, which may be defined as a few capitalists, plenty of labour, with a minimum of the intermediate class. Few unprejudiced persons will deny that this is a bad economic state for a country at large, although it may suit the purposes of some individuals. The more intelligent coloured and black natives to some extent fill up the gap between capital and labour, but they only imperfectly satisfy the conditions. The coloured man, often well educated, is too fond of aspiring to the learned professions, which are generally overstocked, and would probably do better for his country and himself if he devoted his energies to trade instead, while the cases in which negroes have enriched themselves to any considerable extent by mercantile pursuits are sufficiently rare to constitute the exception rather than the rule.

In support of this assertion the following quotation is made from an article entitled "Our People," in *Timehri*, an excellent journal of British Guiana, where negroes and East Indians mingle under somewhat the same conditions as in the neighbouring colony of Trinidad. "It is unfortunate that the black man is not by nature a trader or a shopkeeper, for nearly all the people whose possession of a little money ensures them local conspicuousness made it by virtue of their commercial instincts. The black man is always the buyer and the European (including, of course, the Portuguese), the Chinese and East Indians are always the sellers" (July number, 1912). This, in fact, is one of the chief reasons why the negro is jealous of the East Indian. He can resign himself to the superiority of the white man, who has had the advantage over him in almost every respect,



but it hurts his self-esteem to see the East Indian succeed, because the latter has laboured under disabilities at least equal to his own. It would certainly have been preferable for Great Britain to have populated her West Indian possessions with people of her own race, but if she cannot do that it is far better to send others capable of rising in the social scale.

In yet a third way the East Indian immigration has benefited Trinidad by introducing new industries. The rapidly increasing cultivation of rice is solely due to this source, concerning which the above quoted journal (*Timehri*) makes the following remark in the article which treats of "The Minor Industries" of British Guiana: "The fact that just a few years ago the black peasant thought it beneath his dignity to plant this cereal, and that we have lived to see the East Indian hiring black men and women to work in his rice fields, is indeed significant."

Trinidad has also furthered her own interests by maintaining several staple agricultural industries, so that she has not been so hard hit by the fall in the price of sugar as those islands which depended chiefly on this product. Cocoa is now the principal agricultural export, while the many miles of canefields along the western coast prove that sugar still takes a very important second place, and coconuts, which come next in order, are steadily gaining ground.

Passing now to the suggestion of a cause which will not be flattering to England's pride, it may be asked whether the foreign origin of so many of its white inhabitants may not have had something to do with this prosperity. In other islands formerly foreign possessions, such as Dominica, St. Lucia and Grenada, although the language of the peasants is only now changing from French to English, the leading foreign families have to a great extent disappeared, while in Trinidad a large number of the principal people are true creoles, the descendants of French or Spanish colonists, among whom the non-European element of the population has had a better opportunity for rising in the social scale than among people of Anglo-Saxon race. Reference will be made to this in the last chapter. From the excellent statistics given in Mr. Aspinall's "Pocket Guide to the West Indies," it will be seen that in Trinidad the revenue, imports and exports are practically equal to those of Jamaica, an island of double the size and more than double the population. This in itself speaks well for Trinidad, but in giving the non-European element their due share of the credit, the part contributed by the white people must not be forgotten.

We will now turn to those so-called natural causes which have undoubtedly contributed to the prosperity of Trinidad. It is fortunate in climatic conditions. Hurricanes, earthquakes and volcanic eruptions have not retarded progress, while the steady rainfall and humidity have favoured tropical agriculture. It has also some sources of revenue which the other West Indian Islands do not possess, as in the asphalt from the Pitch Lake. The export of the asphalt, however, is only worth about one-seventh of that of the cocoa, thereby showing that a pre-eminent position would have been attained without aid from this adventitious source.



The oilfields recently discovered have also suggested boundless possibilities. The prosperity, however, cannot be attributed to this cause, having been established long before these oilfields were commercially successful, and, moreover, Trinidad is not the only place in the West Indies where they exist.

The position of Trinidad, so near the continent of South America, confers a decided natural advantage over any other West Indian Island. This, however, has been greatly neutralized by the heavy customs duties of the Venezuelan Government. Here again a comparison with the relations of Jamaica and the United States is suggested, although the latter country has now relaxed in many instances the high protective tariff against its island neighbour for commercial reasons which have had an ulterior effect in making Jamaica an adjunct of the United States. Venezuela, however, can have no hope of absorbing Trinidad in a similar manner, and has been provoked to retaliate for trouble caused by sheltering revolutionaries and smugglers. According to statistics given in Mr. André's interesting book, "A Naturalist in the Guianas," the inducement to carry on a contraband trade is very considerable. He cites as an example the case of salt, the importation of which into Venezuela is prohibited owing to the Government of that country having the monopoly of the salt-pans in its territory, where salt can only be bought at an average price of eight dollars for three hundred pounds, while the same weight and quantity of salt can be bought in Trinidad for about three shillings.

My account of Trinidad may be suitably concluded with the following well-known creole song, which is interesting for several reasons. The prose recitations between the verses afford a better means of understanding the broken French of the negro peasants than if the whole of the production were trammelled by rhyme or metre. This *patois* or creole is spoken with considerable similarity in all the French-speaking islands from Haiti to Trinidad, so that without being precisely the same, it is sufficiently similar for the natives to understand each other—although a Frenchman confronted with it for the first time would not be so successful. It is curious that this dialect should have become so naturalized in a country where French never was the official language, but, as before stated, the number of French colonists almost ousted Spanish from being the general medium of conversation. Had it not been for this, it is probable that with the advantages of proximity to the Spanish-speaking continent and of official use, Spanish would even now have been the language of Trinidad. The difficulty in standardizing a *patois*, however, makes it inefficient as a written language, so that although there is still in Port-of-Spain a newspaper partly conducted in Spanish, creole French is little used except in conversation, and appears destined to become extinct here in a few generations. Quite apart, however, from the merit of this poem as a creole production decidedly above the average, the ground taken by its author is interesting as showing how keenly the French-speaking peasant, presumably black or coloured, resented the British occupation of the Island.



[Original.]

## CHANSON CRÉOLE.

PAR CHARLES RENAUD.

La Trinité pays möèn aimèn,  
 Coument ous fair' tomber nans lamain  
 Des gens qui pas tini' raison,  
 Ni yon petit bouèn quèchôïe de bon ?  
 Pàlé : Anglés touop couyon, mon cher.

2

Nans yon côté con La Trinité,  
 Ous vlé di' möèn dé ô tois Anglés  
 Rentré ici pouend pays nous,  
 Sans bâ nous temps tirer yon 'tit coup ?  
 P. : Tombeau ! cé ça qui bobo chër möèn, pou' toute bon.

3

Ça möèn c'aller fair' pou' nourri' bien  
 Ces petits zenfans Bondié bâ möèn ?  
 Planter citron, planter gros piment  
 Anglés pouend toute pou' l'assessiment.  
 P. : Anglés ca voler con chate.

4

Nans temps Chacon tou' sé différent  
 Möèn toujours sé tinî place sergent,  
 Sé va sêvi anî quand möèn vlé,  
 Et sé toujours bien faraud souplé.  
 P. : En bas Chacon yon jou' möèn ca vini général, en bas les Anglés,  
 jamain.

5

Gadez möèn sale con yon vacabon ;  
 Cé pas fôte möèn di' ous pou' toute bon,  
 Cé quand Anglés débacher ici  
 Möèn pouend couri' nans bois Caroni.  
 P. : Qui ça ! Pouend pays möèn, et pis chouer möèn aussi ! "Dat  
 is tou motch," con di' yeaux même.

6

Depis temps-là möèn ca bouigander  
 Con yon bouigand qui möèn pas té yé,  
 Pisse möèn simié couri' con yon sêpent,  
 Pitôt mourî con yon grand couyon.  
 P. : Ah ! ous save, mon cher, ça qui couri' jordi ca vive pou'  
 goumèn demain.



[*Literal Translation.*]

## CHANSON CRÉOLE.

PAR CHARLES RENAUD.

*La Trinité pays moi aimer,  
 Comment vous faire tomber dans la main  
 Des gens qui pas tenir raison  
 Ni un petit brin quelquechose de bon.*  
*Parlé : Anglais trop bête, mon cher.*

2

*Dans un côté comme La Trinité  
 Vous voulez dire moi deux ou trois Anglais  
 Rentrés ici prendre pays nous,  
 Sans donner nous temps tirer un petit coup.*  
*P. : Tombeau ! c'est ça qui blessa cœur moi, pour tout de bon.*

3

*Que moi aller faire pour nourrir bien  
 Ces petits enfants Bon Dieu donner moi ?  
 Planter citron, planter gros piment  
 Anglais prennent tout pour l'assessement.*  
*P. : Anglais volent comme chat.*

4

*Dans temps Chacon tout serait différent,  
 Moi toujours aurais tenu place sergent,  
 Aurais servi uniquement quand moi voudrais,  
 Et serais toujours bien habillé s'il vous plaît.*  
*P. : En bas Chacon un jour moi serais venu général, en bas les Anglais,  
 jamais.*

5

*Regardez moi sale comme un vagabon ;  
 C'est pas faute moi dire vous pour tout de bon,  
 C'est quand Anglais débarquer ici  
 Moi prendre courir dans bois Caroni.*  
*P. : Quoi ! Prendre pays moi, et puis tuer moi aussi ! "That  
 is too much," comme disent eux-mêmes.*

6

*Depuis temps-là moi brigander  
 Comme un brigand qui moi pas n'étais,  
 Puisque moi oui-mieux courir comme un serpent,  
 Plutôt mourir comme une grande bête.*  
*P. : Ah ! vous savez, mon cher, celui qui courir aujourd'hui vit pour  
 gourmer demain.*



[Original—continued.]

7

Yeaux tini' bon temps toute ces bouigands-là,  
 Möèn pas té là nans ces moments-là,  
 Möèn sé foutre à grands cou' d'bâton  
 Depïs soldats j'tque à grand Picton.

P. : Oui, camarade, möèn yone sé foutre yeaux toute à têt, et pïs  
 aïen pas sa chember möèn ; apouésant yeaux pas là pou'  
 foutre yeaux toute à têt ; möèn cé yon nomme qui mauvés  
 quand möèn levé, ous save.

8

Tonnêr craser, möèn simié mouri',  
 Main, coutez bien, sans pèdî lavie,  
 Pisse pou' rêter en bas les Anglés,  
 Jamain, jamain, möèn pas c'aller vlé.

P. : Ah, qui, caramba ! Coument ous ca fair' rêter en bas les Anglés ?  
 Ous ca contrer yon Anglés, ous ca di' li "Bonjou' missié" ;  
 li ca di' ous "Go-tê-èl" ; ous ca mander li "Coument ous yé" ?  
 li ca di' ous "Go-tê-èl" ; "Qui religion ous ?" li ca di' ous "Go-  
 tê-èl" ; Qui, caramba ! Coument ous ca fair' épis des gens con  
 ça qui anî connaitte boutêie-là.

9

La Côtiferme cé yon bon pays,  
 Coument ous jône, obèn guacheri,  
 Depïs latête tini' bon chevé,  
 Ous ca passer pou' yon bon béqué.

P. : Ça cé voué, oui ; La Côtiferme, toute moune qui tini' bon  
 tête cé béqué.

10

Möèn c' aller La Margarite,  
 Pisse là rempli bien bon cabouite ;  
 C' aller fumèn bien bon guarache,  
 Bouèr bon guarape, manger guamache.

P. : Oui, caramba ! là cé yon petit isla qui pas tini' caïman pou'  
 manger ous, ni enpile générale pou' chagriner ous tou-lé-  
 moument—Voy por la Margarita.

11

Si Margarite yeaux lever gougèn,  
 Ce pas sé möèn qui mêter lamain :  
 Si côté möèn yon fisi' fair' "tà" !  
 No sea pendejo ! pou' la Trinité.

P. : Ah, ous save möèn pas si couyon ; depïs chouer làdans möèn  
 pas là, pace möèn simié couri' avant möèn connaitte möèn mort.



[*Literal Translation—continued.*]

7

Eux tenir bon temps tous ces brigands-là,  
Moi pas étais là dans ces moments-là,  
Moi aurais fouetter à grands coups de bâton  
Depuis soldats jusqu' à grand Picton.

P. : Oui, camarade, moi un (seul) aurais fouetter eux tous à terre et puis rien pas savoir attraper moi ; à présent eux pas là pour fouetter eux tous à terre ; moi c'est un homme qui mauvais quand moi levé, vous savez.

8

Tonnerre écraser, moi oui-mieux mourir,  
Mais, écoutez bien, sans perdre la vie,  
Puisque pour rester en bas les Anglais,  
Jamais, jamais, moi pas aller vouloir.

P. : Ah, quoi, caramba ! Comment vous faire rester en bas les Anglais ? Vous rencontrez un Anglais, vous dites lui " Bonjour monsieur " ; lui dit vous " Go-tê-èl " ; vous demandez lui " Comment vous êtes ? " lui dit vous " Go-tê-èl " ; " Quelle religion vous ? " lui dit vous " Go-tê-èl " ; Quoi, caramba ! Comment vous faire avec des gens comme ça qui uniquement connaître bouteille-là.

9

La Côte Ferme c'est un bon pays,  
Comment vous jaune, ou bien guacheri,<sup>1</sup>  
Depuis la tête tenir bon cheveux,  
Vous passer pour un bon blanc.

P. : Ça c'est vrai, oui : La Côte Ferme, tout le monde qui tenir bonne tête est blanc.

10

Moi aller La Margarite,  
Puisque là rempli bien bon chèvres ;  
(Moi) aller fumer bien bon guarache,<sup>1</sup>  
Boire bon guarape,<sup>1</sup> manger guamache.<sup>1</sup>

P. : Oui, caramba ! là c'est une petite île qui pas tenir caïman pour manger vous, ni empile généraux pour chagriner vous tous les moments—Voy por la Margarita (Je vais à la Margarita).<sup>2</sup>

11

Si Margarite eux lever bataille,  
Ce pas serait moi qui mettre la main :  
Si côté moi un fusil faire " ta " !  
No sea pendejo (Ne soyez pas fou) pour la Trinité.

P. : Ah, vous savez moi pas si bête ; depuis tuer là dedans, moi pas là parceque moi oui-mieux courir avant moi connaître moi mort.

<sup>1</sup> *Guacheri* = anything very common.

*Guarache* = tobacco.

*Guarape* = a kind of rum.

*Guamache* = a vegetable delicacy.

These words are of Spanish-American origin, but are not true Spanish. The Island of that name on the coast of Venezuela.



The poem has been translated literally into broken French, so that the reader may be able to follow the construction. It would require a creole grammar to explain all the peculiarities of this dialect, but a few of the principal ones may be noticed :—

(1) The absence of the ordinary inflections of the verbs, to avoid which the infinitive construction is often used, as *möèn c'à aller* (me to go) for *je vais*, or a word like *simié* is coined (probably from *si* = yes and *mieux* = better).

(2) Syllables are often clipped, as *mander* for *demander*.

(3) The letter "r" is frequently eliminated. This presents no difficulty when the "r" is final, as *bonjou'* for *bonjour*; it is harder, however, to recognize a word when the omission takes place in the centre, as *voué* for *vrai* or *pouend* for *prendre*.

(4) The French-speaking negro avoids diphthongs; thus *cœur* becomes *chêr*, *Monsieur* becomes *Missié*, and *cheveux* becomes *chevé*.

(5) The frequent Spanishisms are of two kinds in construction and in the use of Spanish words. Among the former may be noticed the employment of *tini'* (*tenir*) for *avoir*, and of the pronoun after the infinitive, as *di' möèn* (*dire moi*) for *me dire*.

More Spanish-American words are naturally incorporated into Trinidad *patois* than into that of the islands further removed from the Spanish-speaking continent. Many of these words, however, are not of true Spanish origin, as *guarape*, which appears to be identical with the *warrap* of the Guianese Indians.

(6) In the seventh verse there is an attempt at a new grammatical construction by spelling *yon* (*un*) with a final "e" when it stands without a noun.

The word *béqué* (*blanc*) is interesting as being the source of the word "buckra," used in the English-speaking islands to denote a white man.



## CHAPTER XXVIII.

## THE WEST INDIAN QUESTION.

**W**HAT is the West Indian Question, which by its very name implies an inquiry rather than an assertion?

To those familiar with the depressed commercial condition of the West Indies of late years the name may seem to imply the discussion of a grievance. This is only one of the points at issue. Is it then an enigma, difficult or impossible to solve? No, for many of the component parts are obvious. Is it a state of things arising from the natural course of events? In part, yes. With this prelude the discussion will refer to the present unsatisfactory condition of the British West Indies, and to what extent it may have been brought about by foreign influence, natural causes, want of enterprise, mistakes of the colonists themselves, or neglect of their interests by the British Government.

The only assertion hereby made, that the present state of these Islands is not satisfactory, will hardly be denied by those best acquainted with the subject. Changes have, indeed, taken place since the times when Froude and Kingsley emphasized this opinion; some of the defects, however, to which they drew attention still exist, while others have arisen more recently. British capital and enterprise do not find sufficient inducement, middle-class colonists are conspicuous by their rarity, and the large negro population has been most unfavourably contrasted with that in the French islands by such competent American observers as Mr. Robert Hill and Mr. Charles Stoddard, whose remarks as to "abject poverty" and "incessant begging" are almost similar. The former writer, indeed, in an endeavour to do justice, describes the British Crown Colony system as containing "excellent administrative features, accompanied by high taxation and economic decay"; this, however, is a kind of praise which no one would covet. In case this American criticism should be considered too severe, the remark of Mr. H. Walker (in "The West Indies and the Empire") may be quoted, "It is a fine comment on our rule in the West Indies that British negroes should be driven to seek employment under a foreign flag." The fault cannot be attributed to the fertile soil, or to the climate in which the white man maintains good health by avoiding severe manual labour and the negro thrives as in his native country. Americans, as a rule, show a more practical appreciation of the West Indies than the English, who are too prone to regard these Islands merely as holiday resorts, beautiful places with an everlasting summer, but not otherwise of much importance. The beauty, however, is more easily taken in at a glance than the political,



commercial and racial questions which abound in this fair region to such an extent that, with all Great Britain's experience in vast colonial possessions, these little Islands have become one of her more vulnerable outposts.

External influences have caused greater changes in the West Indies than in any other part of the inhabited world during the few centuries which constitute their historic era. Even during the last few years of peace the transition has been going on as fast as in previous times of warfare, and the result is likely to be more permanent. Before entering into details, therefore, it will be worth while making a few observations about the other seven nations which own West Indian islands. Of the three European Powers, France, Denmark, and Holland, it may be said that they have no aspirations in this part of the world, and that no action on their part would be likely to damage British interests directly, although by selling their possessions to the United States, as nearly happened to the Danish island, St. Thomas, a few years ago, the waning influence of Great Britain in the West Indies would be made more apparent. These three nations, therefore, as far as the West Indies are concerned, may suitably be called Provisional Powers. Passing from them we come to the two largest islands, in which there are three different Governments, those of Haiti, Santo Domingo and Cuba. Haiti, the Black Republic, under its present conditions is incapable of advancing on the same lines as most civilized nations, owing to its exclusive treatment of the European race. In the eastern part of the same Island, however, the Republic of Santo Domingo has a population of a different nature, coloured but not black and without a racial dislike to Europeans. The United States has already obtained an indirect control over this Republic by means of the loan which has enabled them to take over the proceeds of the customs, as security for the money advanced. The same Power now exercises a suzerainty over Cuba, the Pearl of the Antilles, whose majestic length of more than seven hundred miles has been described by Mr. Robert Hill as consisting in three-fifths of its extent of "rolling plain, valleys and arable slopes." So many English people believe that Great Britain is the dominant Power in the West Indies, owing to the possession of a number of little islands, that it may not be amiss to remind them that Cuba is about ten times the size of Jamaica. The Cuban flag, therefore, even more than those of Haiti and Santo Domingo, exists only on the sufferance of the United States, and the whole three may be looked upon as the emblems of Pictorial Powers which serve a certain purpose on the map by an apparent distribution of territory. The United States now owns Porto Rico, where, in contra-distinction to the six nations before mentioned, it may fairly be called a Permanent Power. This island, colonized chiefly by the white race, will compare favourably with Jamaica, although the area of the latter is slightly greater. Thus it will be seen that, although Great Britain still holds the same territory as before the end of the last century, the balance of power has been altogether changed.

Among these external influences none has already produced a greater result than the gigantic undertaking of the Panama Canal, in which Great Britain, by the Hay-Pauncefote treaty, abrogated her right to participate. Great as has been the moral effect of this



enterprise among British subjects of the white race, the many thousands of British negroes by whom the greater part of the manual labour has been done, have been even more impressed by it. Their difficulties in obtaining a fair rate of wages for their labour or a small piece of land on which they could exist as peasant proprietors caused an enormous exodus to work for a nation whose treatment of their race they particularly disliked, and although not a few have left their bones in the place from which they had hoped to carry away the few pounds which represented a fortune to them, the survivors have returned with their hard-earned wealth, impressed with the magnitude of the Power which recruited them in British dominions, much in the same manner that the natives of India would be if recruited by a foreign agent in their own country for the purpose of making a Russian railway in Persia. Great Britain, in virtue of her great transatlantic possessions, stands in a much more favoured position than the Provisional Powers before mentioned, yet by her inaction she has lost much political power and, together with loss of prestige, now finds herself confronted at closer quarters with an opposing commercial system, which vitally affects her West Indian possessions. This, of course, is especially noticeable in Jamaica, from its situation between the United States' new dependency, Cuba, some ninety miles to the north, and the American sphere of influence in Panama to the south.

The progress of the West Indies lies in great measure in the number of its white colonists. In this respect climatic conditions have certainly not favoured the Anglo-Saxon to the same extent as the Spaniard, who from being more adapted to endure heat, has colonized Cuba and Porto Rico to such an extent as to cause Froude to say with justice, "The Spaniards have done more to Europeanize their Islands than we have done. They have made Cuba Spanish—Trinidad, Dominica, St. Lucia, Grenada, have never been English at all." According to Mr. Salmon (author of the "Caribbean Confederation") the following small white percentages exist in the three most important British islands—less than eight and a half in Barbados, under six in Trinidad and not even two and a half in Jamaica. Why did not England colonize her islands with her own people? In answer to this the difficulties of the labour question must be remembered. Great Britain may fairly claim to have taken the lead of the world in the colonization of temperate climates, but where are her tropical colonies? India is not a colony, South Africa is not tropical, and that part of northern Australia which is tropical remains practically undeveloped by white labour. The almost tropical heat in parts of Spain gave her colonists an undoubted advantage in the West Indies, a fact which has been specially noted by Mr. Robert Hill in the remark, "No white man can do manual labour in the tropics continuously and live, unless he is of the Latin races."

If England could not send out white labour to the West Indies, why did she not send out more of her middle class? They were not wanted by the growers of sugarcane, who for so many years represented the only power and industry in the principal British islands. To use the words of Charles Kingsley, "Excessive sugar cultivation put a premium on unskilled slave labour to the disadvantage of skilled



white labour." No one questioned the wisdom of a system of colonization which only required a few white men to superintend the work of a large number of negroes as long as sugar paid well. The first shock to this system was the emancipation of the slaves, a measure which will not allow of reasonable complaint, but in the subsequent developments the planters had good grounds for discontent with the selfish policy of the Home Government. A large amount of sugar was produced in some of the foreign countries where slavery still existed. This was a most unfair competition with the employer of free labour, yet this product of slavery was admitted for some time before it was penalized by taxation. Then came the Bounty System for beet-sugar, by which several foreign Governments paid their agriculturists for exporting this product, while the British West Indies received no corresponding subsidy. This blow nearly exterminated the sugar industry in these Islands until an improvement was made in the beginning of this century by the combined action of several European Powers in the agreement generally known as the Brussels Convention, by which the contracting parties, of whom Great Britain was one, undertook to levy a corresponding duty on any sugar which had received a State Bounty. Great Britain has lately withdrawn from this convention and will now have no status in the council of nations which to some extent controls the sugar industry. Perhaps the British West Indies may be too apprehensive about the consequences of this action; nevertheless, it is a plain indication that England has abandoned a principal industry in her colonies to the arbitration of foreign nations. To turn now from unfair competition with a protected industry in Europe, let us regard a similar condition in America. Anyone acquainted with the British West Indies will admit that of late years they have been hard hit by the protective tariffs of the United States, concerning which the American writer, Mr. Robert Hill, says, "It was the protective barrier placed by us against the sugar of West Indian Islands which almost paralysed them." This summary of facts connected with the sugar industry has been necessary in order to show a few of the difficulties against which these Islands have had to contend, penalized alike by the protective bounties of Europe towards her own people, and by the protective tariff of America against foreigners.

In a short treatise on West Indian matters it would be out of place to launch into the abstract merits of free trade or protection, of which Great Britain and the United States have been respectively the exponents. While, however, there is much to say in favour of an isolated country buying the commodities of life in the cheapest market, the case becomes somewhat different in a country like England, whose importance is in great measure due to her own colonies, which can only be permanently retained by a community of interests. Many of the leading West Indians, at any rate, think that England has not done what might have been expected in this respect, in proof of which a prominent Jamaican will give his opinion at the end of this chapter. Fortunately, the United States tariff of 1913 gives promise of opening the American market to sugar free from duty, an important concession which has received the following favourable comment in "The West India Committee Circular"



(October 7, 1913): "We have pointed out that as regards sugar the West Indian producers will have the advantage of an open market close to them, although it will be two years and a half before the free sugar clause comes into operation." This, indeed, will be a welcome innovation for the British West Indies after having been placed at a disadvantage for about ten years, as compared with Porto Rico and Cuba, owing to the preferential treatment which these latter islands have received. The same statute also confirms the already free entry of bananas, coffee, cocoa and coco-nuts, and remits the duty on asphalt, thereby relieving the British West Indies (for the present at any rate) of the apprehension that the United States would retaliate by a hostile tariff on account of the recent agreement with Canada. Thus, owing to the relaxation of the tariff of the United States and to the Preferential Treaty with Canada, these West Indian Islands may reasonably hope to have an enhanced market for their exports in these two countries.

Making all allowances, however, for the difficulties which have hindered the progress of the West Indies, it must be admitted that British enterprise has been somewhat deficient in developing the resources of these islands. Why, for example, was it left to the Americans to discover and exploit the banana industry, which, while saving Jamaica from the commercial ruin threatened by the loss in sugar, has been the chief factor in alienating the interests of that Island from England? Such a neglect of British interests is made strikingly apparent by statistics ("The West Indian Committee Circular," October 7, 1913), which show that in 1912 not one-thirteenth of the bananas imported into the United Kingdom came from Jamaica, the greater part of the so-called "West Indian bananas" coming in reality from Central and South America, and the figures given for the four preceding years are so little more satisfactory as to suggest a chronic neglect. Thus it pays to import bananas from foreign countries further away than Jamaica, while the Jamaican banana goes to a foreign country. The same neglect takes place in other islands, only in different forms. Why are Danish steamers the only ones which take cargo from the eastern coast of St. Lucia, at present so isolated from the capital owing to the badness of the road? Why is the wonderful Pitch Lake in Trinidad leased to an American company instead of a British one? Asphalt at all events is not a perishable commodity like fruit, and would not be damaged by a long voyage. The condition of no country can be considered sound if foreign enterprise takes the preponderance. The flag always follows the commerce.

The depression of the sugar industry caused attention to be turned towards other branches of tropical industry which afford more scope for the employment of Europeans who were now found to be insufficient in numbers; for although men of northern races are not suitable for arduous manual labour under a tropical sun, they can well endure the sea-tempered heat of these Islands if only required to superintend the work of African or Asiatic labourers. Continued residence in the West Indies is certainly somewhat enervating, but, on the other hand, there is a corresponding advantage in the bland atmosphere which does not favour those illnesses so frequent in cold



and damp climates. Men of the middle class were now wanted, small capitalists who, with the advantage of cheap labour, could live more comfortably here than in those countries where the cold is excessive, or in the far less healthy tropics of large continents. Why have they not come? Many reasons may be assigned for this, none of them perhaps adequate in themselves, but still sufficient to deter the intending settler of small but independent means. The disadvantageous position in which the West Indies had been placed for so many years owing to legislation, apathetic at home and actively hostile abroad, had made people look to the effect rather than to the cause. The West Indies had not been in a prosperous state; therefore, no one wanted to settle in them. The previous formation of large estates had not been congenial to settlers of limited means. Those who represented the old order of things encouraged (and still encourage) the idea that only wealthy people are wanted, from an apprehension that their own interests might suffer from the invasion of middle-class white immigrants whose opinion could not be disregarded like that of the black population. Barbados and Jamaica, two of the most anglicized Islands, have taken the lead in this respect. By placing impediments in the way of the landing of second-class passengers, Barbados has contributed to retard the progress of her West Indian neighbours. Granted for the sake of argument that she wants no middle-class settlers herself, it is surely unfair that traders or settlers from the adjoining Islands should be obliged to submit to the treatment mentioned in a former chapter every time they want to do business or to recruit their health in an Island which may be called the sanatorium of the West Indies. Under the Crown Colony Government of Jamaica it may be harder to put direct impediments in the way of admitting middle-class people, still something can be done indirectly by assuming that every stranger should be rich, and by creating a feeling that it is not dignified for a white man to travel on foot, so that he may be looked upon with contempt by the negroes. No greater impediment can be placed in the way of colonizing a country where living is cheap than by forcing people to assume a style beyond their means.

The curious affectation that every respectable person must travel in the first class has even crept into official quarters. In two pamphlets of advice to settlers (compiled by the principal resident officials of two different Islands), the price of a first-class passage in the Royal Mail steamer has been quoted. Considering that these settlers are supposed to be persons of very limited means, possessing about £2,000, they would not be warranted in paying (say) £25 for a first-class passage in the Royal Mail when they could save several pounds by travelling in the Danish steamers or in the second class of the English Line, although perhaps the latter of these alternatives would be as severe an ordeal to them as to the negro clergyman who, when assisted in his return passage to the West Indies, is reported to have been dismayed on finding that second class accommodation had been provided for him, saying that the people would no longer respect him. The extreme slowness of the steam communication has probably some influence in keeping people away from the West Indies. Surely there cannot be many



other lines of British mail steamers which only average thirteen miles in an hour, while the route of the Danish Line by an island so far north as St. Thomas makes the passage to many of the British islands considerably longer than it should be. There are, of course, other lines, but all circuitous or very slow.

Mr. Froude assigns the following reason for insufficient colonization: "The misgiving that the West Indies are consigned by the tendencies of English policy to the black population." So far, nothing of this kind has happened. Most of these British islands are under Crown Colony Government, which is very unlikely to place the white race in a subordinate position. The scarcity of the white colonists, however, has undoubtedly placed an impediment in the way of the continuance of that elective representation which most of these islands possessed before emancipation. If a free measure of franchise were granted, the white people would be in a hopeless minority, while the negroes themselves would as soon have a Crown Colony as a so-called Representative Government like Barbados, in which they are practically unrepresented. Mr. Thomas (the author of "Froudacity") in his spirited defence of his people, declares that the negroes would vote for the best man, irrespective of colour. Doubtless some of the more intelligent would do so, but the temptation to "plump for colour" on certain questions would be hard to resist. The illusion, indeed, must here be dispelled that the black man takes no interest in managing his own affairs. He takes no interest in the elections in Barbados because he seldom has a vote, and even if he had one he would probably be unable to vote for the person of his choice, owing to the considerable qualification of property which a member of the House of Assembly must have; so he takes the more dignified course of ignoring the proceedings. When, however, he meets his black countrymen at assemblies where he has a vote, such as at one of the many benefit societies, he shows an extreme interest, to judge from the cheers given when any popular measure has been passed.

There can be little doubt than an insufficient number of these people are settled on the land. This is the more to be deplored considering the aptitude of the negro for agricultural pursuits and the desire he generally has to become a peasant proprietor. Unlike the East Indian, the negro does not readily take to trade, and when able to rise above the condition of a hired labourer, he would do better for his country and for himself by cultivating his own homestead, instead of seeking some poorly paid employment. It has been shown how in Haiti, where he has opportunities of living on his own ground, the negro will not compare unfavourably in condition, as far as can be judged from home, clothes, and general appearance, with a peasant in the anglicized islands, thus showing that the possession of a means of subsistence has been able to counterbalance the advantages of a superior civilization. So far, however, from encouraging the ownership of small holdings there has been a tendency on behalf of the ruling classes in the British islands to retard it from the interested motives of wishing to control a monopoly of land and labour. This is especially the case where sugarcane is extensively grown, being an industry generally



conducted on a large scale. The very fact that the editor of a Barbados newspaper should have had to plead for the principle of allowing land to be sold (not given) to the peasants shows that a considerable amount of opposition must have been offered, while the results of such sales have been declared to be beneficial by competent authorities. Here, at any rate, the blame cannot be altogether attributed to the Home Government, which is responsible for a sufficient number of mistakes without being saddled with those committed by others, in proof of which may be quoted the following words of Sir Norman Lamont, who, as a person intimately connected with the planting industry, may be assumed to speak with some authority: "It is because several of the West Indian Governments very nearly approximate to the oligarchical form, either by the direct or indirect influence of the planting class, that no heed has been paid to the first and by far the most important recommendation of the 1895 Commission, viz., 'the settlement of the labouring population as peasant proprietors'" ("Problems of the Antilles," by Norman Lamont). Taxation also must be made very light while the negro remains in his present depressed condition, so as not to give just cause for the complaint of the black politician of Grenada: "Too much advantage has been taken of the poor people who have gone to Panama and to Brazil and will never return."

In the absence, therefore, of a white middle class, which would have formed an invaluable bridge between the divergent interests of the owners of large estates and the black population, almost all these islands have remained Crown Colonies, which are here at a great disadvantage as compared with the same system in a large continent. The number of small islands has necessitated a large number of officials and a correspondingly large expenditure. This self-evident fact cannot be more plainly expressed than in the words of Mr. Salmon, himself an official: "In no other country in the world is there anything like the same proportion of the public taxes eaten up by salaries as in these British West Indies." In other ways, however, besides waste of money, these numerous Governments have done harm by creating a want of uniformity, which has led to diverging interests. With the object of consolidating these interests and of giving the united West Indies a voice in the management of its own affairs, several schemes of federation have been formulated, as, for example, one by Mr. Salmon many years ago, and another recently by the Hon. C. Gideon Murray, Administrator of St. Vincent. There is reason to believe that the Home Government would not be averse to such a policy, for it cannot be to the interest of Great Britain that any part of her dominions should be inefficiently governed; but the want of sympathetic treatment which might have welded together these colonies has already produced such divergencies that while some of these islands have been quite aware that a federation would be to their own advantage, others considered that they would lose by it. Among the latter have been, unfortunately, two of the most important islands, Jamaica and Barbados. Their reasons, however, for opposing a Joint Government were quite different, in the former case being commercial, in the latter political.

Barbados is proud of those representative institutions which so



few of the British West Indies possess, and is afraid of having its privileges impaired by federating with other islands now in the subordinate position of Crown Colonies. The free does not wish to associate on equal terms with the bond. Why then has not Great Britain obviated this difficulty by giving the neighbouring Islands representative institutions, so that Barbados could associate on equal terms with them? This might, indeed, be done by means of the same kind of limited franchise which has given a white ascendancy in Barbados. A scheme of this kind would require three different stages for its consummation, in the following sequence: representative institutions with a limited franchise, federation, and a gradually extended franchise. It may be objected that most of the people would have no more voice in their own affairs than they have now by changing what Mr. Salmon calls, "bureaucratic despotisms" and "dummy assemblies" for a Barbadian oligarchy. The forms, however, of representative institutions once established, the substance would follow in time, and the immediate effect should be a consolidation of interests, with a decrease in taxation and expenditure. This suggestion is chiefly made to show that an assimilation of the forms of government would make a subsequent federation more feasible. Even the strenuous upholders of Crown Colony Government admit that it would be better for these Islands to be governed in a more uniform manner; the opinion, however, of the West Indies itself is divided on the relative advantages of government by the Crown or by themselves, and the object of this discussion is to make a plain exposition of facts in harmony with general West Indian interests and to avoid subjects of discord.

The unwillingness of Jamaica to federate with the other Islands has been of a more serious nature, proceeding from a desire to throw in her lot with the United States rather than with the other British colonies. The West Indies have suffered so much from protective tariffs that any British island may be considered fortunate in possessing in its principal export a commodity so much desired in the United States as to be admitted free of duty. This is the case with Jamaica. When the prosperity of the Island was nearly ruined by an inability to sell sugar at paying prices, owing in great measure to foreign subsidies and adverse tariffs, a trade with bananas gradually sprang up with the United States, and has now assumed such large proportions that it has become the principal industry. This exportation of bananas and of several other agricultural products, on which no duty is levied in the United States, has consolidated the interests of Jamaica with that country. Is it then strange that Jamaica should have been unwilling to federate with the other Islands, which, being less dependent on the United States, might have adopted a commercial policy opposed to that country, in which case a retaliative tariff would have fallen most heavily on Jamaica? On the commencement, therefore, of negotiations for a treaty of reciprocity between Canada and the British West Indies, the latter became divided into two commercial camps. Most of the Islands whose sugar had been adversely taxed in the United States considered it to their advantage to make a commercial treaty with Canada, which agreed to reduce the import tax on this article in consideration of corresponding



advantages. Barbados, while not wishing for political federation with the other Islands, was among the foremost to assent to this agreement, owing to its almost exclusive dependence on the sugar industry. Jamaica, on the other hand, was unwilling to become a contracting party, from the conviction that whatever advantages might be gained from the admission of sugar at a reduced tariff in Canada, would be more than counterbalanced by a retaliative tariff against bananas in the United States.

The attitude of Great Britain in forcing the West Indian colonies to shift for themselves by arrangements with Transatlantic countries may be taken as a confession of weakness in the following terms: "We cannot help you. It is against our policy to give any preference to our own people, but if Canada is disposed to assist you, we will allow you to treat with her." The result has been to accentuate the already diverging interests of these Islands in the directions of Canada and the United States respectively, while in both cases the connection with the Mother Country has been weakened. In making any full exposition of the West Indian Question the author was aware that it would be sometimes necessary to refer to the policy of the British Government in an unfavourable manner, and he was therefore anxious to obtain an expert opinion relative to some of the subjects discussed in this chapter. In selecting the Island from which this information should come, Jamaica was chosen, partly on account of its importance and partly because the proximity of the United States would cause certain developments to be felt here in their full degree. Several questions were therefore referred to a gentleman who, as an owner of estates and a former member of the Legislative Council of Jamaica, should be exceptionally well qualified to give a competent opinion. The following six answers, given exactly as received, will show that the author has commented on the attitude of the British Government towards the West Indies in a less critical manner than his correspondent who has had the experience of a lifetime in Jamaica.

(1) Are the owners of sugar estates displeased with England's action in abandoning the Brussels Convention, and do you think that such action has injured the West Indies?

"Yes, undoubtedly. It is of course said that no injury has been done, but as there is no confidence as to what further step Great Britain may take, capital is not available for extension of the sugar industry."

(2) Do leading Jamaicans think that England has done her duty to the West Indies generally?

"No, certainly not."

(3) Do they like the idea of a West Indian Confederation, either including Jamaica or without it?

"West Indian Confederation is a dream; no practical scheme has ever been advanced and is not likely to be—Jamaican interests do not lie in that direction at all."

(4) Is there any strong feeling for annexation to the United States owing to England's apathy or to prohibitive United States tariffs?

"There has been in Jamaica a strong feeling for annexation to the United States frequently, but *not* arising from United States prohibi-



tive tariffs. The feeling has arisen in consequence of unfair treatment and neglect of Jamaican interests by Great Britain, while trade has steadily gone towards the United States for the past forty years. It is our nearest and natural market, and, with the exception of citrous fruits and sugar, the United States takes nearly all our products free of duty, including bananas, coffee, cocoa, &c., the two latter being heavily taxed in Great Britain. The feeling among people who think (and also as the facts show) is that Jamaica has had one long fight for fair play since the abolition of slavery, and the interest taken in Jamaica in Great Britain is practically *nil*. There is no sentiment in the United States about the West Indies. She wants our trade and is getting it because she works to get it, and Jamaica cannot afford to cross or thwart her, for it is certain, if she did, the United States would retaliate at once."

(5) Has reciprocity with Canada been definitely settled and are West Indians hopeful about it?

"A certain reciprocity with Canada may be said to be settled with most of the West Indies, but *not* with Jamaica. She kept clear of any negotiations for the reasons given in (4). As to whether the West Indian Islands in this agreement are hopeful about the result, I should say certainly, otherwise they would not have gone into it!"

(6) How is it that the United States admits Jamaican bananas without a protective tariff? Presumably, up to lately they have not had sufficient tropical territory of their own; but now, with Porto Rico, Cuba, Hawaii and the Philippine Islands, they ought to be quite independent of Jamaica, and is it not expected that heavy tariffs will soon be imposed and the banana trade of Jamaica thereby ruined?

"The reasons why the United States admits bananas free are, first, because she wants the banana as food for her people—up to date she cannot get supplies sufficient from her own territories, and Jamaica and Costa Rica can supply cheaply and in large quantities. *Re* Cuba, the growing of bananas has not been successful. It is *not* expected that the United States will impose heavy tariffs on our products, and in Jamaica and Costa Rica American interests are too large to be touched. There is no fear of the Jamaican banana industry being 'ruined' by the United States. It might be ruined by disease and frequent disasters."

No comment is needed on the answers to questions No. 1 and No. 2, except to notice that they are emphatic. The answers to questions No. 3 and No. 5 show clearly that the interests of Jamaica do not correspond with those of most of the British West Indies, either with regard to federation among themselves or reciprocity with Canada, and that this largest West Indian island of Great Britain is anxious to keep out of any agreement which might tend to thwart the commercial policy of the United States and thus provoke retaliation by a prohibitive tariff. The answer to No. 4 gives most cause for reflection. It is a candid avowal that, in consequence of continued neglect, Jamaica takes practically no interest in England and would rather be annexed to the United States, in order to have a more complete and certain measure of those commercial advantages which she now only receives partially and on sufferance. With reference to the bananas, coffee and cocoa mentioned, the comparative



shortness of the voyage must give the American market the advantage in the case of so perishable an article as fresh fruit. This, however, is no reason why the Jamaican banana trade should not have been carried on by British enterprise, which has gone further west to tropical America in search of a fruit which it has practically abandoned to Americans in a British colony nearer home; while Great Britain's policy of taxing those products of her own colony, such as coffee and cocoa, which a foreign country admits free of duty, seems calculated to strain the allegiance of the colonists. It is the case of Free Trade and Protection reversed: Free Trade with foreigners and Protection against your own people! The answer to No. 6 shows that Jamaica has been fortunate in being able to compete successfully in bananas with a fertile island like Cuba, which is ten times larger and has prior claims on the United States. It cannot, however, be taken as a creditable result of British policy or enterprise that her largest Island in these regions should have so much capital invested in it by foreigners that their Government could not ruin the said Island without self-injury, nor is such a position consistent with Imperial security.

These answers were written before the publication of the United States tariff of 1913. As, however, this tariff is decidedly more favourable to the West Indies than the preceding one, it is not likely that a knowledge of it would have affected the opinion given, except to make it, if possible, more emphatic. In comparing the tariffs of Great Britain and of the United States in the cases of seven such important West Indian products as bananas, cocoa, coffee, coco-nuts, asphalt, petroleum, and sugar, it will be seen that the only three admitted free of duty into Great Britain at present are, bananas, coco-nuts and asphalt; while all of them are now on the free list in the United States, except sugar, which will have the duty remitted in 1916. The tariff of the latter country, therefore, while strongly protective in the case of manufactured goods, is so framed as to admit the raw produce of the West Indies on more favourable terms than Great Britain. This is not a question of Free Trade, or of Protection, but of the unwise policy of Great Britain in taxing the exports of her own colonies more heavily than a foreign nation does.



## CHAPTER XXIX.

## THE COLOUR QUESTION.

THE Colour Question, like the West Indian Question, is more easily explained by a discussion than by a definition. It is seen to its greatest extent in the United States, where it forms a decidedly unsatisfactory feature, but is sufficiently prominent in the British West Indies to make it a matter of importance. The name, however, is in such general use that its meaning may be approximately defined as "the relative position which the white and black races hold, or should hold, towards each other." It implies, of course, the inferiority of the black race, for, if both races stood on terms of equality, this question could never have arisen. No comparison can be made without having a distinct idea of the things compared. Most white people have a more or less distinct idea of their own race, but their idea of the negro is somewhat hazy.

To use the words of Mr. W. P. Livingstone (in "Black Jamaica"), "when judging the negro the whites employ the only standard known to them, that is their own." It will be worth while, therefore, to consider the negro as far as possible from his own point of view before placing him in the position assigned by our race, and this can only be done by noting the words and actions of negroes themselves on the subject of their relative position.

"My poor countrymen, you earn your bread by the sweat of your brow." This was the remark of an intelligent Jamaican black woman who had travelled, and must be taken to mean that the negro is a manual labourer rather than a brain worker. "He's done well for a black man." Such was the opinion of one of several negroes who were talking about a man of their own colour who had succeeded in raising himself quite above the position of the labouring classes. It certainly implies that a negro could not be expected to succeed as well as a white man. "The black people always have foolishness in their heads," said an old Jamaican negress. "The white people have foolishness in their heads sometimes," was the answer. "Yes, but it passes with them, while the black people have it always," replied the old woman, to the evident disparagement of the mental powers of her race.

These three comparisons, however, were made during friendly conversation, while the following two are of a different nature.

"I'm the same as a white man." The speaker, a passenger in a Barbadian tramcar, was an irate negro who was blaming the conductor, himself black or coloured, for not stopping the car at the desired place. The passenger evidently implied that he had been slighted on account of his colour and demanded the same treatment



as a white man. "We're all equal here." This remark was made under peculiar circumstances. It was shortly after the earthquake in Jamaica, when the central part of Kingston lay in ruins. A crowd of people had assembled in front of that patched-up part of the post-office where business was being carried on, awaiting their turn to reach the window of the office, somewhat after the manner of theatre-goers, except that they lined the wall in single file instead of in pairs. A white woman, instead of taking her place in the order of her arrival, most foolishly tried to anticipate her turn by forcing her way between those near the window. With quiet determination the line of people closed in to oppose her entrance, with the muttered comment, "We're all equal here." The word "here" was very suggestive in the sense that, whatever difference there might be socially, all were equal in any business connected with the public service. If a white man had acted in such a manner the publicity of the occasion would hardly have saved him from abuse, but negroes are more deferential to white women than to men, either from a natural gallantry or from motives of prudence.

The former three of these quotations plainly admit the inferiority of the black race, while the latter two show that the negro keenly resents any corresponding treatment as an inferior. A black man of any education copies our civilization as closely as he can, even in Haiti, where the leading people imitate French manners while they treat Europeans exclusively from a fear of being worsted in the contact. Both these actions are sincere forms of flattery. We may, therefore, assert from the negro's point of view that he admits in his candid moments that he is not an equal, but that he objects to a corresponding treatment. This, of course, only applies to treatment which implies racial inferiority, for as a subordinate he will cheerfully obey orders.

So much for the black man's view of his position ; and we will now take the opposite side of the question. There are but few of the European race who hold that the negro, as at present constituted, is the equal of the white man ; there is, however, a considerable difference of opinion as to what his latent capabilities are, some even maintaining that in the course of civilization he will eventually reach the same high standard. These latent capabilities, however, will take so long to develop that they do not enter into this discussion, for we are concerned with a present condition of considerable tension which it is desired to relieve, and the self-evident fact that the negro has been placed in a position of relative inferiority will hardly be questioned. The white man, therefore, considers that the black man is an inferior who should be treated as such, while the black man considers that he is an inferior who should not be treated as such. In the difference between these tenets lies the sting of the Colour Question.

That this is really the case is amply proved by the result, for it will be found that the more the white man asserts a racial superiority, the more the black man resents the corresponding inferiority, and the more acute the Colour Question becomes in consequence. It is a practical application of the law of physics, "action and reaction are equal and opposite." While, however, the white race asserts a more



or less superior position, its different branches vary greatly in the vantage ground they assume, relative to which it will be shown that the Anglo-Saxon branch is the most self-asserting, and, therefore, excites the greatest corresponding reaction. For this purpose we will compare the state of the Colour Question under three different lines of treatment—in the United States, in the British West Indies, and in the West Indian Islands colonized by the Latin nations.

Everyone acquainted with the United States knows the disabilities to which black and even coloured people are subjected. This is very noticeable in the Southern States, where law and custom combine to keep the negro in an inferior position. Marriage between the two races is illegal, railway carriages are set apart for negroes, and even on insignificant street stalls may be seen the words, "For whites only." Yet in everyday life the reaction which might be expected is not visible: the negro is quite civil, far more so than in the British West Indies. What is the reason of this complacent attitude quite at variance with the theory just evolved? It is the calm before the storm, the latent period during which the pent-up resentment is acquiring sufficient strength to break loose. Sooner or later there is an outbreak which is so sternly repressed that the scared negroes are pacified until the lapse of time emboldens them to retaliate afresh. This is a system which can only be upheld by armed force.

In the British West Indies the case is very different. Here we have a comparative state of equality between white and black people. Law and custom allow the negro to do anything which the white man may do, therefore no repression by armed force is necessary. Man, woman or child may walk through even the most anglicized islands without fear of danger. Is there then no inequality and therefore no reaction? Certainly there is, but in a minor degree. The negro is not satisfied with the equality which law and custom allow him. He is conscious that he is not considered equal from a social point of view. In this respect the law is unable to give him any redress, and he consequently resents the social inequality by a correspondingly pacific form of rudeness. This does not, of course, infer that all British negroes are rude, for if such were the case their equality before the law would make life intolerable for white people, but only that the "rough nigger" assumes this attitude. The black man of education knows that rudeness will not avail, and takes the wiser course of endeavouring to prove by his conduct that he is socially equal. The reason why the white man finds a difficulty in admitting the negro to social equality hardly enters into the discussion, which merely affirms the fact. It is probably due, not to the darkness of skin, as such, but because the colour conveys with it certain characteristics at variance with European sentiment. To use the words of a negro, "The black man looks upon things from a different point of view." Until the two races, therefore, look upon things from the same point of view, the difficulty about social equality will probably continue.

Even the "rough nigger" does not find this reactionary rudeness convenient on all occasions. He is generally submissive to a large employer of labour, as such a person may represent his daily bread in a place where employment is scarce, or to a prominent resident



who might some day preside over his destinies ; he is, therefore, most unlikely to address the manager of a plantation or a well-known magistrate in such terms as "How d'ee, Uncle," or "Give us a match, old fellow" ; but, when he meets a stranger for whom he has no use, he delights in this familiarly contemptuous manner, which is almost more objectionable than the overt hostility of a Haitian. Although this rudeness is in the main a reaction due to social inequality, it is aggravated by an exclusive policy towards middle-class white people whom the negro has thus learnt to despise, and by the hardship of his own position when he has neither money to buy food nor land of his own to cultivate. The very begging so prevalent in the British West Indies has a reactionary character, often resembling that of the tramp who asks for assistance as his right. It might be asserted that the manner of a British negro is only a reflection of English manners, which are admitted to be worse than those of foreigners. This is a possible explanation rather than a likely one, as the demeanour of the white West Indian is generally courteous, owing to the almost complete absence of the lower classes and the natural feeling that the few white people should behave civilly towards each other.

At the risk of being profuse in quotations it will be necessary to notice what others have said on the subject, as this argument is only based upon the credible testimony of others and well-known facts. On the broad question of the attitude of the British negro towards Europeans, Charles Kingsley remarks, "We white people bullied these black people quite enough for three hundred years, to be able to allow them to play (for it is no more) at bullying us." A condition, however, which appears trivial or absurd to a visitor assumes a graver aspect to the person who passes his life under its influence. We will now notice what Mr. Ober has said in a remark evidently made with the intention of doing justice to Barbadians: "Always hearty and good-natured, though independent, even insolent, toward the white people, the blacks of Barbados are the best workers in the West Indies." No one will accuse Sir Spencer St. John of partiality towards the people of "The Black Republic," yet, in comparing the manners of two different classes of Haitians, he makes the following remark: "Both classes at the same time are infinitely superior to our colonial negroes, who are in Port-au-Prince proverbial for their insolence." Most of these would naturally be Jamaicans, from the proximity of that Island.

This behaviour, to which St. John applies a harsher name than has been claimed for it, has undoubtedly had fatal consequences when the British negro goes to foreign parts, as to Panama, where occasionally a death from violence has been recorded in the Barbadian newspapers.

To turn now to the third phase of the Colour Question in the Latinized islands. This is best exemplified in Cuba, where our Question may be said to be almost non-existent. All over the civilized world, probably, the white man will have some advantage over the black ; the fact, however, that during the war in Cuba some coloured men rose to high rank proves that the two races are here on a somewhat equal footing. Those who have read the adventures in Spanish-America, to which this book is a sequel, will remember the ridiculous story about the Cuban



general who was refused refreshment in his own country by an American hotel-keeper on the grounds that the general was a coloured man, and how the general gained the action which he brought against the hotel-keeper in consequence, although the latter appealed to the United States, where it was expected that the verdict of the Cuban tribunal would be reversed. Social inequality on account of colour is, therefore, less strongly marked among southern Europeans than with the Anglo-Saxon. Two writers, Mr. Froude and Mr. Thomas, the latter of whom wrote "Froudacity" with the express object of contradicting what the former had said, are absolutely agreed on this point. Mr. Froude remarks, "The Spaniards have inherited a tinge of colour themselves from their African ancestors." This would be unfair to the Spaniards if meant to convey the idea that they had thus inherited any negro blood from the Moors, who are just as free from it as white Africans, but in the implied sense that a southern European will harmonize with a negro better than an Anglo-Saxon would, it is perfectly correct. Mr. Thomas likewise affirms that the bridge between the two races is harder to cross in the case of the Anglo-Saxon on account of "the inborn racial contempt." The French have not been so successful as the Spaniards on the subject of social equality. This is in the natural order of things, as the former are the most northern of the Latinized nations. Still they have succeeded better in the treatment of their negroes than the English. A French-speaking negro does not beg even in those islands which have long since passed into the hands of the English, but where French customs still linger. In such places the white man may travel on foot, unmolested by the annoyances already described, a courteous "*Bonjour*," and perhaps a salute with the hand, being the only form of recognition.

Any suggestion for the improvement of this condition in the British islands is attended by a certain difficulty. The American methods of repression are cruel, and while producing the desired effect for a time, they in reality make matters worse. The system, however, is consistent, reaction is met by counter-reaction. In Cuba no system is required, as the result of social equality has set the Colour Question at rest. The system in the British islands, while better than the American, is not consistent, and herein lies its weak point. While conceding full legal equality it will not concede social equality, and yet it offers no means of restraining that reactionary resentment which is certain to result.

Is there, then, no way of making the negroes in those very few islands where English customs prevail as civil as they are in all the rest of the West Indies? Without any attempt at explaining a method which a traveller does not have sufficient opportunities for studying, a word might here be said in favour of the Danish system. We have in this instance a northern race, without any "tinge of colour," to use Froude's simile, able to exert so beneficial an influence over its negroes that they compare most favourably in manners with those who have become thoroughly anglicized, as in Jamaica and Barbados, and this is done without the violently repressive measures prevalent in the United States. The question asked the British official who lived near St. Thomas may appropriately be repeated here, together



with the conversation which followed. Why are the negroes of St. Thomas more civil than those in the British islands? The answer, in an inquiring tone of voice, was "Paternal Government." What do you mean by Paternal Government? "It means that if a negro is known to be an annoyance to the public he is made to leave the Island, without any specific charge being brought against him." A penalty of this kind is peculiarly applicable to conduct which hardly merits imprisonment but which has become a nuisance. The offender might be banished for a limited period, and failing to comply might be forcibly deported. The knowledge that habitual rudeness is punishable by banishment would have a restraining influence on the "rough nigger," who could not defy the paternal power of the Government as he does the ability of a private individual to make him responsible for expressions uttered in the presence of those who will not bear witness against him, or so adroitly worded that the rudeness does not come within the pale of the law. This would be no departure in principle, as a certain amount of paternal government already exists in the British West Indies. Some of its forms in Jamaica have already been mentioned, such as the imprisonment of a "prophet" and the obligation of a deck passenger to receive a permit from the police before he is allowed to leave the Island. In the time of the exodus to Panama no Jamaican negro, unless under exceptional circumstances, was allowed to take a deck passage to that place until he had left a deposit of about twenty-five shillings to pay for the return journey.

Temporary regulations of this nature would aid in bridging over the difficulty until a more fundamental policy had time to act, as repressive measures are not so desirable as those which make repression unnecessary. The measures which would most conduce to the settlement of the Colour Question, under the conditions of social inequality in the British islands, are those already advanced, the improvement of the economic condition of the negro and the increase of white immigration, of which the former is the most urgent. Much will be tolerated by the negro on the score of social inequality if the means of living are more freely granted to him. He has given practical proof of this by going to Panama to work under a nation whose treatment of his race is far more repressive than that of Great Britain. His condition in several of the British islands has received unfavourable comment from competent observers, and in those places where his poverty is greatest his manners are worst; may it not then be inferred that there is a direct relation between them, as of cause and effect? The Governments of the British West Indies are too much inclined to think that they have done their duty to the negro by placing him in contact with the improvements of modern civilization, without paying sufficient attention to giving him the means of subsistence, which depends in great measure on the ownership of land by such an agricultural race. No attempt is here made to under-estimate the advantages of education or sanitation, but food is even more essential, and we have seen how in Haiti the peasant proprietor has an advantage which cannot altogether be neutralized by ignorance, despotic government or other disabilities of the Black Republic.



The immigration of a white middle class, at present so scarce in the British islands, would aid powerfully in the same direction. There is a force in numerical ascendancy which cannot be altogether counteracted by intelligence or wealth, and for this reason a larger white middle-class population would exercise a controlling influence on the manner of the black people towards them, especially by refuting the idea that people of limited means have no business in the West Indies, and thus putting an end to the injustice of obliging such people to bear the brunt of the Colour Question, while the capitalists and ruling classes who have so largely contributed towards it are practically exempt from its consequences. This has been amply proved by the experiences in Grand Cayman, where, owing to the number of white settlers, far from rich, the negroes are much more civil than in Jamaica, although under the same Government.

Such is the Colour Question, a mild affair in the British West Indies to what it is in the United States, but quite sufficient to be disagreeable. The demand of the negro for social equality is illogical in the face of his confession that he is not an equal, although his attitude is more reasonable than that of a white man who is offended at being placed in an inferior position to someone else of his own colour. The white man may have lost his chance, the black man never had it. An attempt has been made to approach this subject in an impartial spirit, but whatever opinion may be held about the argument there is no doubt about the fact that in the West Indies, with the doubtful exception of Haiti, the more a negro has assimilated English manners the less civil he is likely to be, and therefore that British treatment has not been successful. Any traveller can verify this for himself by travelling through the Islands mentioned in this book. It is not asserted that British negroes are rude as a rule, but they certainly are more often rude than foreign ones; yet all these black people have been so mingled with each other as not to be distinguishable in tribal origin and contain practically the same inherent qualities.

The attributes and the welfare of a race which comprises by far the greater part of the population of the British West Indies is a matter of importance, too often lightly considered in describing these parts. There is probably no one more susceptible to external influence than the African, who thus becomes the reflection of the treatment he has received. His natural tendency is to look up to the European; but from having been ill-used in former times he has become somewhat aggressive in consequence. Thus the negro gives the white man an ever-varying reception—sometimes respectful in accordance with his inward belief, and sometimes rude as an outward protest against that belief. This is well exemplified by the difference in the manner of the sexes towards a white man. Most of the writers who have described the British negro in these Islands are men, nearly all of whom have been more favourably impressed by the black woman than by the man of the same race. Without denying the arguments which they have advanced in support of their opinions, it is more than probable that their judgment has been largely influenced by the attitude of the sexes towards them.



The negro, like all primitive races, is a hero-worshipper. In the white man he sees a being whom his instincts prompt him to respect, and for this reason he becomes the most faithful companion and servant in those cases where his affections have been captivated, obeying with a blind fidelity rarely found in others. Too often, however, this respect is tinged with jealousy of one who has obtained more advantages than himself, and thus admiration becomes blended with hatred, in the manner inferred by those races who allude to foreigners of a superior civilization as "devils."

The black woman sees the white man from the former point of view only. There is nothing of the "new woman" about her, so the difference of sex precludes any thought of rivalry. In him she admires a higher intelligence than her own, and if a white man were in mortal peril there is no one of his own colour who would protect his life more zealously than the black woman. A few generations have not changed her nature from that so forcibly depicted by the African explorer, Mungo Park. He had sunk exhausted, towards nightfall, under the shelter of a tree, where he might have perished but for the care of a black woman, who brought him to her house and attended to his necessities. While she and her family were engaged in this charitable task they improvised a song which has been thus described by the explorer: "It was sung by one of the young women, the rest joining in a sort of chorus. The air was sweet and plaintive, and the words, literally translated, were these:—

"The winds roared, and the rains fell,

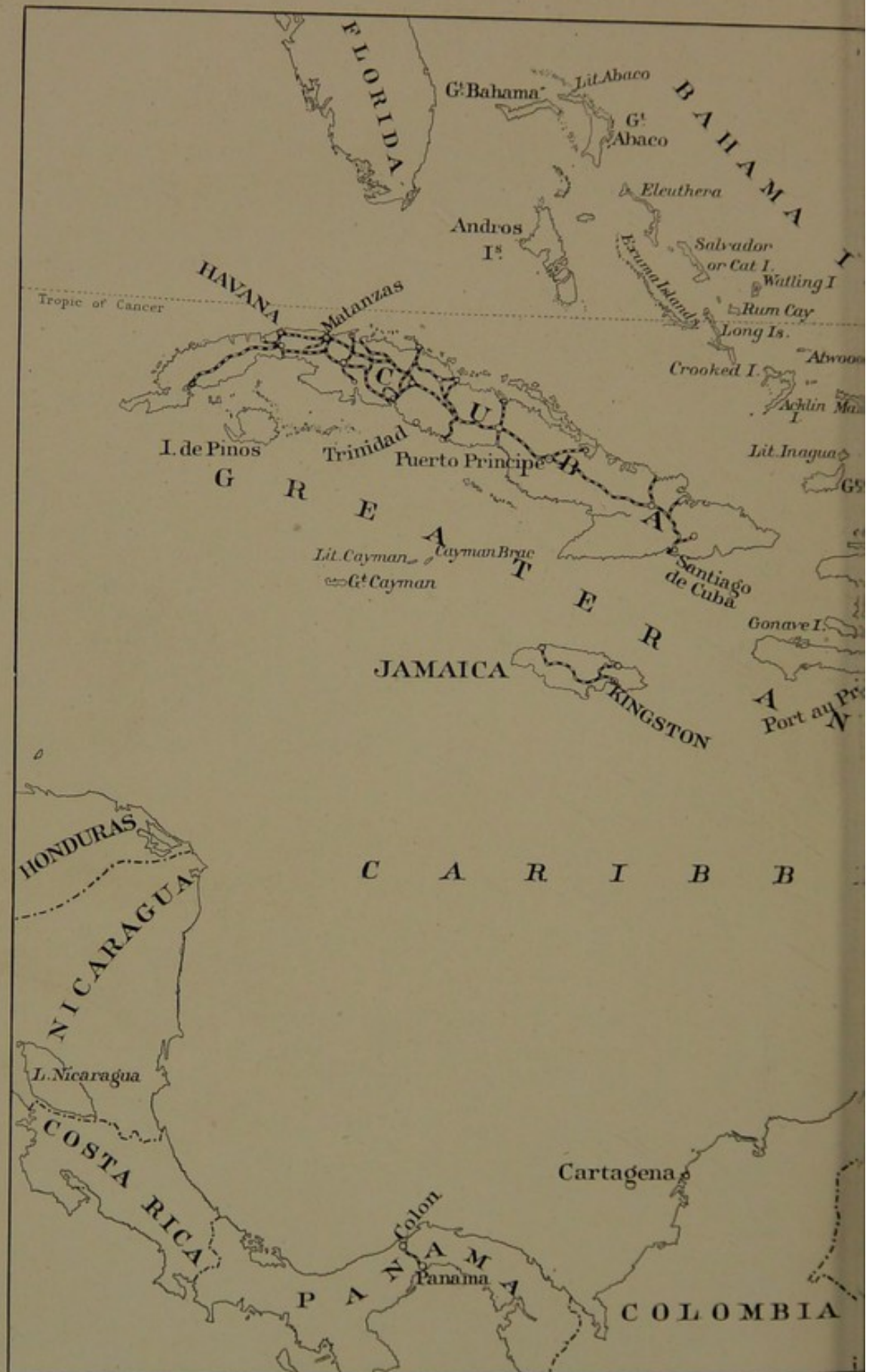
The poor white man, faint and weary, came and sat under our tree;  
He has no mother to bring him milk, no wife to grind his corn.

(Chorus) Let us pity the white man; no mother has he."





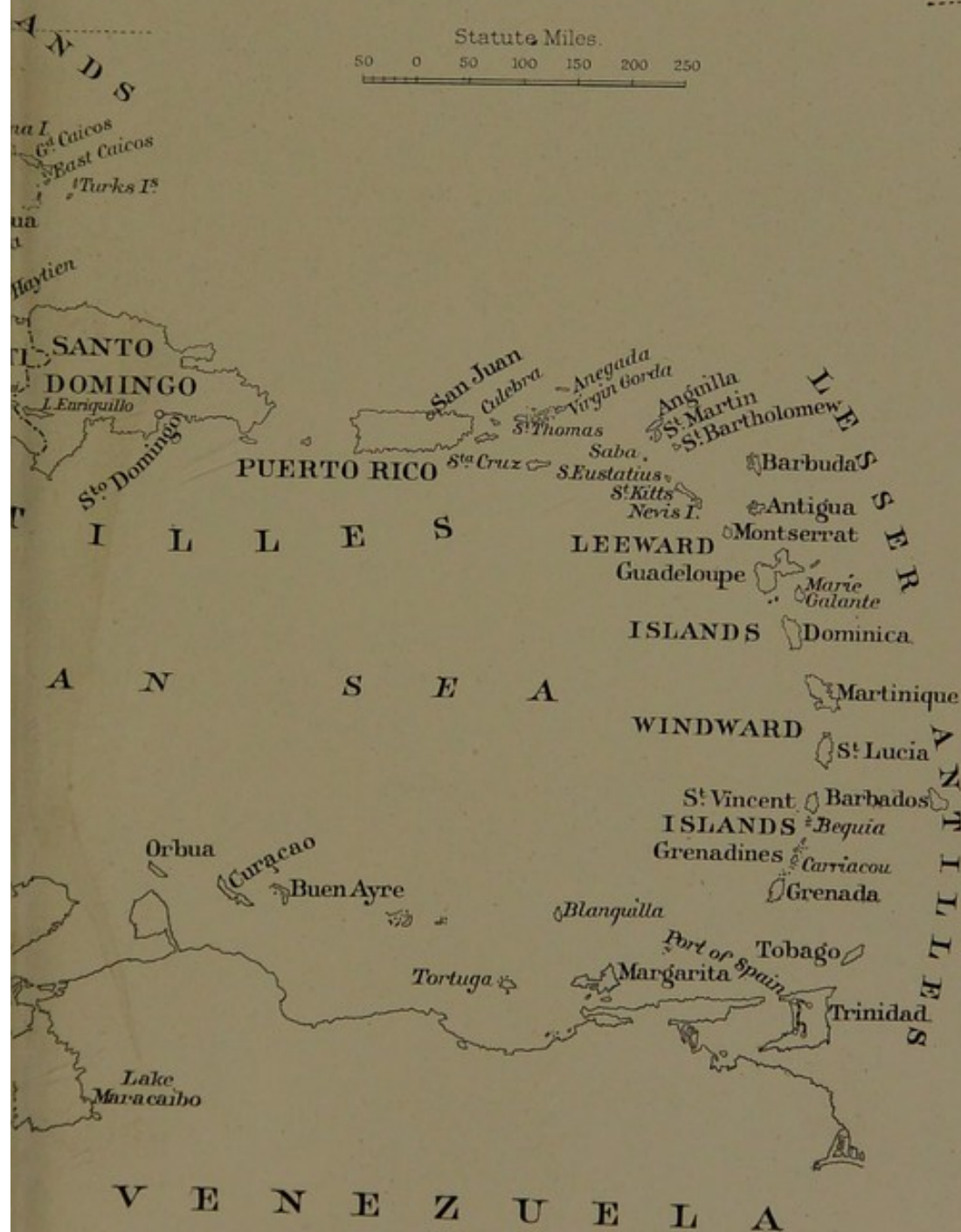




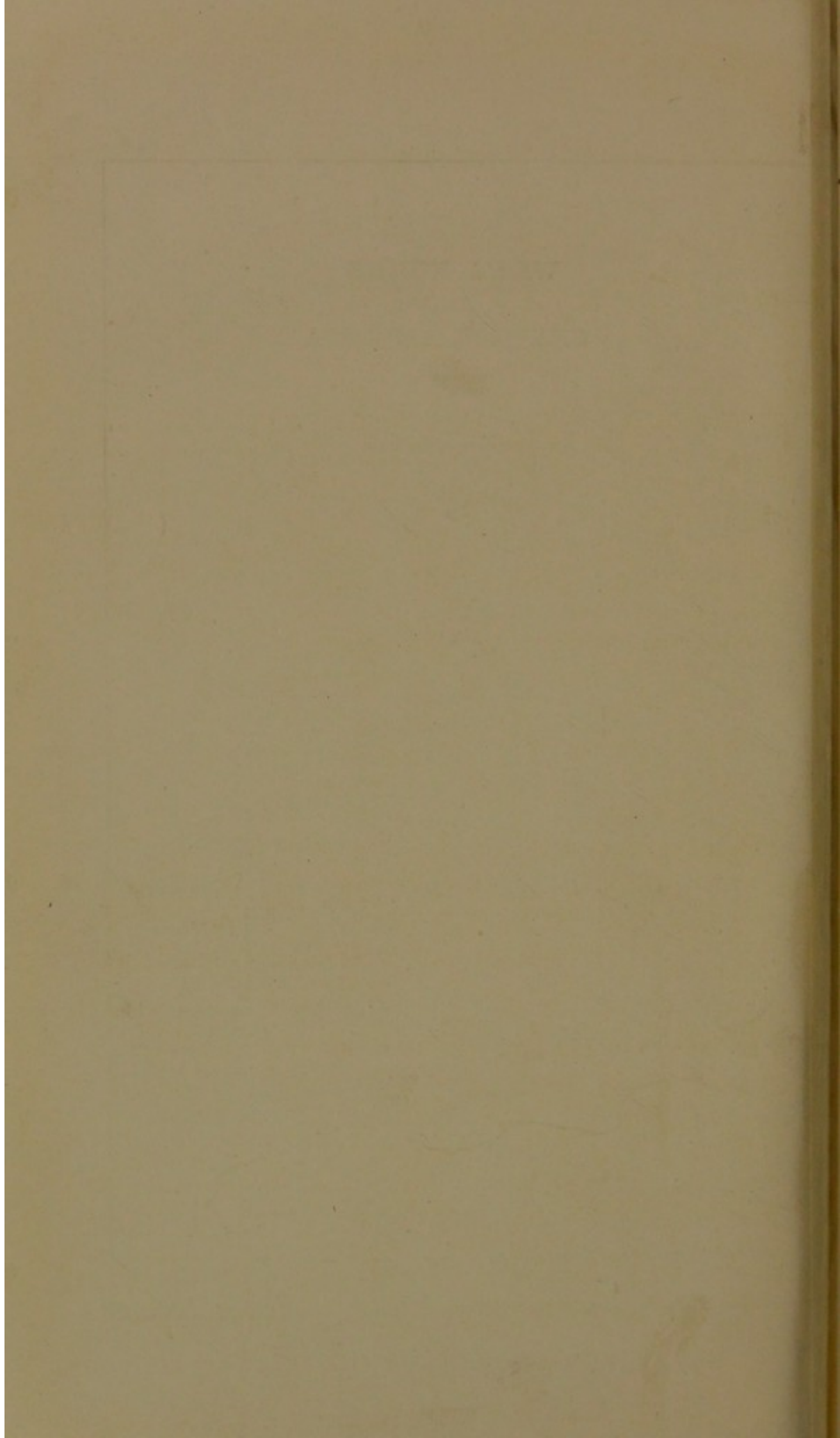


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